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**NAVAL
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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**IRREGULAR TECHNIQUES FOR CONTROLLING
UNDER-GOVERNED SPACE**

by

Matthew D. Coburn

December 2007

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

David Tucker
Hy Rothstein

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IRREGULAR TECHNIQUES FOR CONTROLLING UNDER-GOVERNED SPACE

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The United States government has identified under-governed areas in weakened or failed states as one of the threats faced by the U.S. and its allies because these spaces can provide safe havens for terrorists. Under certain circumstances, the United States Department of Defense (DoD) may choose to counter these threats by utilizing specific elements of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) to work indirectly through irregular forces who can achieve control over and legitimacy with the populations within these under-governed areas. This study uses the cases of Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Taliban in Afghanistan to determine how irregular forces, with external support, can establish political control of under-governed space. To a more limited extent, this study also determines methods that Special Operations Forces (SOF) can utilize to influence irregular surrogates, should SOF choose to operate by, with, and through them to attempt to establish control of under-governed space within weakened or failed states in support of United States foreign policy. This study provides lessons learned and potential implications for emerging DoD irregular warfare (IW) literature and future DoD and USSOCOM IW doctrine design and operational planning.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

In its efforts to come to grips with the complex tasks that it faces in its war on terror, the United States government has developed numerous strategic documents which identify likely threats within the future global security environment. These strategies also address U.S. strategic goals and existing U.S. capability gaps. The United States' *National Security Strategy* identified ungoverned areas in weakened or failed states as one of the threats faced by the U.S. and its allies because these spaces could provide safe havens for terrorists.¹ To counter this threat, the Department of Defense (DoD) states within its *National Defense Strategy* that DoD will prevent the exploitation of "ungoverned spaces and border areas."²

However, in states which may be unwilling or unable to control their sovereign territory, simply occupying these spaces with large numbers of U.S. soldiers poses the potential dual threat of draining U.S. political will and bolstering potential enemy will. A future strategy of this type would expose U.S. soldiers to missions that are often viewed as endless quagmires by the United States public and occupations by some foreign audiences. To add to the

¹ United States Government, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf>, (accessed October 17, 2007), 15.

² Department of Defense, *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005), <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2005/d20050318nds1.pdf>, (accessed October 17, 2007), 11.

complexity of future problems, operating by, with, and through host nation security forces may prove undesirable if the populations residing within particular under-governed areas find the state and its indigenous security forces illegitimate because they have failed to meet the security and welfare needs of the population, or have abused or exploited the population in the past.

To overcome these problems, DoD could attempt to establish control of an under-governed space working indirectly through surrogate irregular forces if those forces had attributes that were desirable to the U.S. such as appropriate access, placement, and legitimacy with relevant local populations and a willingness to accept assistance from the United States. Unfortunately, the irregular techniques required by this strategy are under-developed by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense, and the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and are identified as capability gaps to be addressed in future Special Operations Forces (SOF).³

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to determine how irregular forces, with external support, can establish political control of under-governed spaces in weakened or failed

³ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR)* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/QDR20060203.pdf> (accessed October 17, 2007); Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC) Version 1.0* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007); United States Special Operations Command, *Capstone Concept for Special Operations* (MacDill Air Force Base: Futures Directorate, Center for Knowledge & Futures, 2006), http://www.socom.mil/Docs/USSOCOM_CCSO_2006web.pdf, (accessed February 23, 2007).

states. This work will utilize case studies to examine techniques that irregular forces have utilized to establish political control of under-governed spaces in the past. To a more limited extent, this study will also assess which methods Special Operations Forces can utilize to influence irregular surrogates, should SOF choose to operate by, with, and through them to attempt to establish control of under-governed space within weakened or failed states in support of United States foreign policy.

This study adds to emerging DoD irregular warfare (IW) literature, and offers additional evidence for future DoD and USSOCOM IW doctrine design and operational planning. This study should serve to add substance to the IW framework which DoD hopes to utilize in future warfare. The techniques captured in this study should assist SOF by enhancing their ability to indirectly establish control of under-governed areas operating by, with, and through irregular forces in order to deny potential sanctuary for threats to the United States. These techniques will also enhance SOF's ability to re-establish control after successfully working by, with, and through irregular forces in an unconventional warfare campaign. Both of the above circumstances will require irregular forces to establish political control in under-governed spaces in order to prevent physical sanctuaries for threats to the United States and its allies.

C. METHODOLOGY

The remainder of this chapter will define the concepts of irregular warfare, under-governed space, and political control. Chapter II will present a case study on how the

irregular forces of Hezbollah were able to establish control of under-governed spaces in Lebanon with the assistance of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. Chapter III will present a case study on how the irregular forces of the Taliban were able to establish control of under-governed spaces in Afghanistan with the assistance of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence. From these case studies, Chapter IV will conclude by discussing methods irregular forces and SOF working with these forces can use to establish political control of under-governed spaces in weakened or failed states, describing additional "lessons learned" about irregular warfare, and identifying some potential implications to suggest future research.

D. IRREGULAR WARFARE

What makes IW "irregular" is the focus of its operations—a relevant population—and its strategic purpose—to gain or maintain control or influence over, and the support of, that relevant population through political, psychological, and economic methods.⁴

-2007 Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept

The Department of Defense first specified irregular warfare as a form of warfare in its 2005 *National Defense Strategy*.⁵ DoD determined that its joint forces must improve their proficiency against "irregular challenges" such as those created by terrorist extremist organizations and their state and non-state supporters.⁶ Based upon this

⁴ *IW JOC*, 9.

⁵ 2005 *National Defense Strategy*, 2.

⁶ 2005 *National Defense Strategy*, 18.

strategic guidance, DoD published its 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR) where it specified DoD requirements for improving its capacity and capability to conduct irregular warfare to defeat terrorist networks to include the capability of SOF to conduct "sustained unconventional warfare" and foreign internal defense.⁷ The QDR directed the development of a follow-on irregular warfare "road map" which further defined irregular warfare and tasked USSOCOM to develop a joint operating concept for how future joint forces will conduct irregular warfare.

In the *Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC) Version 1.0*, DoD defines irregular warfare as "a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations."⁸ IW is a form of warfare in contrast to conventional warfare which is defined as a form of warfare between states whose focus is an adversary's military forces with the objective of influencing the adversary's government.⁹ Conventional warfare generally assumes that indigenous populations within operational areas will not be involved in fighting and will accept the outcome determined by the belligerent governments.¹⁰ "In contrast, IW focuses on the control or influence of populations, not on the control of an

⁷ 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 23.

⁸ *IW JOC*, 6.

⁹ *IW JOC*, 7-8.

¹⁰ *IW JOC*, 8.

adversary's forces or territory."¹¹ The warfare occurs to establish control or influence over, and the support of, a relevant population.¹²

The 2006 QDR specified that irregular warfare involved "operations in which the enemy is not a regular military force of a nation-state."¹³ This correctly identified that one of the key actors in irregular warfare campaigns will be irregular forces which DoD defines as armed individuals or groups who are not members of the regular armed forces, police, or other internal security forces of a state. However, these actors are not always enemies of the United States. A default of the United States and its military is to habitually view irregular forces, such as militias, as illicit actors because they are not officially sanctioned by the state system which the United States, as the world's most powerful state, has justified reasons to support. Nevertheless, in certain cases, irregular forces have been and can be viable partners for the United States to work indirectly through to achieve its foreign policy objectives.¹⁴

When SOF, in particular Army Special Forces, conduct unconventional warfare, they do so by operating by, with, and through irregular forces. In these operations, irregular forces become surrogates of Special Forces who can conduct operations in support of United States objectives

¹¹ *IW JOC*, 8.

¹² *IW JOC*, 8.

¹³ 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 11.

¹⁴ Terry L. Hodgson and Glenn R. Thomas, "Rethinking Militias: Recognizing the Potential Role of Militia Groups in Nation-Building" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, June 2007).

which the United States cannot achieve unilaterally. One of these objectives may be to establish control of under-governed spaces in order to deny sanctuary or safe haven to enemies of the United States.

E. UNDER-GOVERNED SPACE

Illicit individuals and groups who use armed violence in ways which threaten the United States and its allies routinely attempt to operate clandestinely and out of reach of licit authority.¹⁵ Whether their operations involve private financial gain such as narcotics and arms trafficking, or violent political strategies such as terrorism and insurgency, illicit actors derive substantial benefits from areas which provide them with refuge to recruit, train, sustain, plan, and replenish free from the view and influence of the United States government and its allies.¹⁶ Additionally, these areas can provide illicit actors with enhanced war-fighting skills, if the local situation provides an opportunity for on the job training in guerrilla warfare and criminal activities.¹⁷

These sanctuaries or safe havens exist for a variety of reasons and a variety of circumstances some of which relate to the degree of governance existing in each specific area,

¹⁵ Robert Lamb, "Ungoverned Areas and Threats from Safe Havens," Draft 0.61, (Draft Working Paper/Pre-decisional paper developed by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy through the Ungoverned Areas Project, an interagency project managed by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning, Department of Defense, Washington D.C., May 2007), 1.

¹⁶ Lamb, 1. See also: Anna Simons and David Tucker, "The Misleading Problem of Failed States: a 'socio-geography' of terrorism in the post-9/11 era," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007), 394.

¹⁷ Simons and Tucker, 389-390.

where governance consists of the security, both internal and external, and services, such as health care, sanitation, education, or utilities such as electricity and water, provided to the population by a political organization. It is important to note that the relevant governing organization does not have to provide all of the security and services to a population as some security and some services may be provided by private or commercial sources. However, the governing organization must be able to either provide security and services to a level that is deemed culturally legitimate to the local population or be able to control those who do. The U.S. considers those areas where governments fail to meet the above criteria to be potential security threats.

These areas are described using various names and various definitions depending on the source. An area may be defined as un-governed when the state performs none of its governance functions effectively, or in rare occasions when no state government actually exists (e.g., at certain periods in Somalia).¹⁸ An area may be defined as under-governed when the state performs only some governance functions effectively, either in a specific area, or throughout its entire territory (e.g., the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan).¹⁹ An area may be defined as misgoverned or ill-governed when a significant faction of a state performs its governance functions in such a manner that allows exploitation by illicit actors (e.g., when Al Qaeda received sanctuary in Afghanistan under the

¹⁸ Lamb, 6.

¹⁹ Lamb, 6.

Taliban).²⁰ These factions may misgovern intentionally or unintentionally due to state sponsorship, or state neglect or corruption.²¹ Finally, an area may be defined as contested when the state fails to perform some or all of its governance functions because of state incapacity, failure, or collapse related to war or a political decision to surrender authority over specific places or functions, and illicit actors fill the void in governance (e.g., FARC-controlled territories in Colombia).

For the purposes of this study, the term under-governed will be used to describe areas where the internationally recognized government, and its associated local governments, do not possess the capability, capacity, or desire to monopolize or control the provision of internal and external security, or the provision of services to a level deemed culturally legitimate by the populations in those areas.

When people discuss these areas and their associated levels of governance, they usually refer to the level of governance provided by the state responsible for that area, but services and security are often provided in these areas by non-state actors through forms of "shadow" governance.²² For example, when states fail, warlords, militias, and even terrorists may seek to provide security and services to gain strength, power, and legitimacy.²³

²⁰ Lamb, 7.

²¹ Lamb, 7.

²² Anne L. Clunan and Harold Trinkunas, "Conceptualizing 'Ungoverned Spaces': Territorial Statehood, Contested Authority and Softened Sovereignty," (Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, August 30-September 2, 2007).

²³ Simons and Tucker, 391-393.

The common denominator in these areas is that actors, whether state or non-state, licit or illicit, can provide levels of governance to local populations which will affect their ability to control or influence populations in these areas, and their ability to determine who will be allowed to operate from or within these areas. In future irregular warfare campaigns, SOF must understand the nuances of this governance and how to manage these nuances to gain and maintain control and influence in these areas through their relevant populations.

F. POLITICAL CONTROL

As noted by DoD in the *IW JOC*, the strategies of irregular warfare will likely focus on the control and influence of a relevant population.²⁴ In order to gain and maintain control, state or non-state actors must use both persuasion and coercion.²⁵

The persuasion can involve the provision of services such as security, justice, education, health care, or sanitation that prove beneficial to a population. These services, if provided to a level deemed culturally acceptable to the relevant population, can lead to a

²⁴ *IW JOC*, 6.

²⁵ The author would like to credit Dr. Gordon McCormick for introducing many of the ideas involved in the development of the term political control. In particular, the concept that control of a population will involve a combination of coercion and consensus. This study limits consensus-building to the provision of services, but Dr. McCormick describes other factors such as the degree of ethnic homogeneity which affect the level of consensus and stability in a given society. Dr. McCormick's term consensus describes the level of legitimacy that a governing organization achieves in a given population in the sense that a population feels a governing organization deserves support.

consensus amongst that population that it benefits from this governance, and assist in gaining or maintaining stability in that population.

However, in all populations, some form of coercion will also be necessary to ensure that illicit actors do not destabilize a population through their activities. Even in the United States, criminal organizations such as gangs and mafias exist because they seek financial gain from illicit activity. These activities impose costs upon the populations they occur within, but U.S. law enforcement agencies possess the ability to detect and disrupt these organizations. None of these criminal organizations can grow to a size or power which prevents U.S. law enforcement from, upon detection, entering a given area and defeating the illicit threats through arrests or if necessary lethal force.

Conversely, too much coercion can be deemed illegitimate. To use the U.S. example again, U.S. law enforcement agencies are severely constrained in their powers of search and seizure because the U.S. population does not wish to live in a police state. Since the United States is relatively stable, this lower level of coercion is possible. Thus, to maintain control of the citizens of a population, a governing organization must also be capable of detecting and disrupting threats in an area to a level deemed culturally acceptable to the relevant population in order to ensure security and stability.

In order for state or non-state actors to gain and maintain control of a relevant population, both the persuasion of service provision and the coercion of force

will be necessary. The amount of persuasion or coercion will vary in each situation dependent upon various political, economic, and social factors. In some circumstances, a population may only expect small amounts of service provision, but may require a high level of coercion for it to stabilize and come under control. In different circumstances, stability and control may be obtained through large amounts of service provision and only a small amount of coercion. An extremely unstable environment may require high amounts of both service provision and coercion. In short, instability and a lack of control will occur where a governing organization does not provide the proper amounts of persuasion and coercion. In these circumstances, grievances can exist and a lack of coercive capability can provide a gap for exploitation by destabilizing forces such as illicit actors. A governing organization must be capable of providing the appropriate levels of persuasion and coercion to a relevant population in order to establish control and stability.

For the purpose of this study, political control is defined as the power of an organization to direct or influence a population, achieved through persuasion and coercion, where the organization possesses the ability to detect and disrupt threats and the ability to facilitate social and economic activity within a given area. With political control, a state or non-state actor would be able to secure a population from control by illicit actors and deny sanctuary to an enemy threat such as a terrorist, insurgent, or criminal organization. Sanctuary will be

denied when the governing organization can prevent enemy threats from operating from or within controlled areas in an effective capacity.²⁶

As discussed, gaining political control in under-governed space will require varying degrees of persuasion and coercion as political, economic, social, and cultural factors will vary in each relevant population, and in some environments, irregular forces may possess the ability to achieve the desired political control. The cases of Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Taliban in Afghanistan provide examples of how irregular forces, with external support, gained political control of under-governed space.

²⁶ Policy makers should define effective capacity when they describe their desired end state to their subordinates in their strategic plans. These definitions will determine how DoD will operate in support of these plans.

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II. THE RISE OF HEZBOLLAH

A. INTRODUCTION

Between 1982 and 1992, the irregular forces of Hezbollah successfully established political control of under-governed spaces in southern Lebanon. As they established control, Hezbollah utilized not only protracted military methods, but political, social, economic, and informational ones as well to establish political control of the populations in their under-governed enclaves in the Bekaa Valley, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and in areas of south Lebanon. Hezbollah received training and advice from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps whose shadowy, protracted support of and influence over their surrogates served both Hezbollah's and Iran's needs and provide examples of tactics, techniques, and procedures for operating by, with, and through irregular forces.

In order to fully understand the rise of the Hezbollah, one must appreciate the contemporary history of the fractured state of Lebanon.

B. LEBANON'S COLLAPSE

The nation of Lebanon, which gained its independence from France in 1943, consisted of seventeen sectarian groups or sects who were accorded political privilege based

proportionally upon each sect's size within Lebanon.²⁷ In 1948, when the state of Israel was founded, over 100,000 Palestinian refugees flooded southern Lebanon.²⁸ In 1970-71, following the civil war in Jordan, thousands of armed Palestinian guerrillas from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) also entered Southern Lebanon.²⁹ These PLO militants challenged the Lebanese government and established "a virtual state within-a-state encompassing west Beirut and much of southern Lebanon."³⁰ This strife between various sects, particularly Christian Maronites, and the PLO vying for power within Lebanon resulted in the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975.³¹ This Civil War eroded the authority of the state, leaving large portions of the country under-governed.³² As the Civil War took place, the different sects began to establish enclaves which were protected by militias from each respective sect. Meanwhile, the PLO launched attacks against Israel from the under-governed sanctuary of southern Lebanon.³³

²⁷ Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 11. See also: Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah of Lebanon: Extremist Ideals vs. Mundane Politics* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), 3; Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), 12; Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 124.

²⁸ Hala Jaber, *Hezbollah: Born With a Vengeance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 219; Norton, 2007, 14; Norton, 1999, 6; Hamzeh, 15.

²⁹ Sami G. Hajjar, *Hizballah: Terrorism, National Liberation, or Menace?* (Strategic Studies Institute: Army War College, 2002), 3; Norton, 2007, 14; Norton, 1999, 6; Hamzeh, 15; Jaber, 219.

³⁰ Norton, 2007, 14. See also: Norton, 1999, 6; Hamzeh, 15; Jaber, 14.

³¹ Jaber, 12.

³² Kepel, 124.

³³ Hamzeh, 14-15.

C. HEZBOLLAH

Since Lebanese independence, the Shia population occupied a tertiary political position in accordance with the Lebanese National Pact which formed the government. Due to the political patronage system in Lebanon, the Shia population fell behind their Christian and Sunni counterparts economically as well.³⁴

In the 1960s, Shia activism arose in an effort to address the inequalities within Lebanon's confessional political system. A key leader in this activism was Imam Musa al-Sadr who established charitable institutions and a reformist movement in the 1970s aimed at empowering the impoverished Shia community.³⁵ In 1975, al-Sadr raised an armed Shia militia named *Afwaj al-Muqawamah al-Lubnaniya* (Legions of the Lebanese Resistance), known popularly by its acronym, AMAL.³⁶ In 1978, al-Sadr mysteriously disappeared during a trip to Libya, and AMAL came under the leadership of a lawyer named Nabih Berri, who led AMAL towards a more secular path, but also into confrontation with the PLO who were oppressing, and causing Israeli reprisals upon, the Shia community in southern Lebanon.³⁷

In July of 1982, Israel launched its Peace of Galilee operation and invaded Lebanon in order to clear the PLO from

³⁴ Magnus Ranstorp, *Hizb'allah in Lebanon: The Politics of the Western Hostage Crisis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 25; Hamzeh, 12-15.

³⁵ Augustus Richard Norton, "Hizballah and the Israeli Withdrawal from Southern Lebanon," *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 30, No. 1 (2000): 23; Hamzeh, 14-15, 20-22.

³⁶ Hajjar, 5; Hamzeh, 21.

³⁷ Norton, 2000, 24; Hamzeh, 21-22.

its sanctuary in southern Lebanon.³⁸ At first, the Israeli invasion was welcomed by many in the Shia community because it removed the yoke of the PLO from southern Lebanon.³⁹ Unfortunately, as time passed and Israel failed to exit Lebanon, their liberation began to be viewed as an occupation.⁴⁰

The Israeli occupation led to the birth of Hezbollah.⁴¹ While AMAL had transitioned to a more secular organization and attempted to work through the Lebanese state system, a small group of Shia clerics trained in the religious center of Najaf, Iraq alongside prominent Shia ayatollahs, to include Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, broke from AMAL.⁴² Based upon the relationship established between the shadowy Shia clerics and Ayatollah Khomeini in Najaf in the previous decade, this uncompromising clerical cabal accepted financial and training assistance from Iran to form Hezbollah, "the Party of God."⁴³ Hezbollah aimed to drive Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Western forces out of Lebanon, empower the Shia plurality in Lebanon, and ultimately hoped to establish an Islamic State in Lebanon modeled on Iran.⁴⁴

³⁸ Kepel, 126; Hamzeh, 16.

³⁹ Ranstorp, 30.

⁴⁰ Kepel, 126; Ranstorp, 30.

⁴¹ Hajjar, 2; Hamzeh, 15; Ranstorp, 29-30.

⁴² Augustus Richard Norton, "Lebanon: The Internal Conflict and the Iranian Connection," in *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact*, ed. John L. Esposito (Gainesville: The Florida International University Press, 1990), 125; Norton, 2000, 24; Hamzeh, 23-25; Ranstorp, 25-26, 30, 46.

⁴³ Hamzeh, 24; Ranstorp, 29-34.

⁴⁴ Hamzeh, 24-28; Ranstorp, 47.

D. 1982-1992

Hezbollah spent its early years between 1982 and 1985 operating covertly as a nameless, loosely organized group. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) deployed 1,500 of their Pasdaran to the town of Baalbeck in the Bekaa Valley where they trained and advised Hezbollah guerrillas.⁴⁵ The Bekaa Valley was not occupied by the Israelis, or controlled by the Lebanese government, and thus provided a sanctuary for the IRGC to train its surrogates in Hezbollah.⁴⁶ These guerrillas, upon completion of their training, were infiltrated into south Lebanon to add their guerrilla attacks against the IDF and their proxy Christian militias to the attacks by other resistance militias from rival groups such as AMAL.

During these early years of its resistance, Hezbollah was also either involved in, or linked to, the suicide bombings of the IDF military headquarters in the southern city of Tyre in November, 1982; the U.S. Embassy in April 1983; and the bombings of the U.S. and French barracks in October 1983 which resulted in the U.S. and French withdrawal from Lebanon in February 1984.⁴⁷ Hezbollah was also associated with, or involved in the western hostage crisis. Lebanese hostage-taking involved long-term covert and clandestine operations which involved multiple groups,

⁴⁵ Ranstorp, 33.

⁴⁶ Syria had tremendous influence and control over Lebanon and left the Bekaa as a sanctuary as a part of its diplomacy with Iran. See Ranstorp, 35.

⁴⁷ Jaber delineates Hezbollah from Islamic Jihad, Norton alludes to the fact that Islamic Jihad may have been a cover for Hezbollah. Ranstorp directly associates Hezbollah with the suicide attacks. See Jaber, 79-80; Norton, 2007, 41-43; Ranstorp, 38-39, 60-61.

to include Iran, whose purposes varied around interests in negating western influence in Lebanon, attempts to coerce Israel and Kuwait to release Palestinian and Lebanese political prisoners, and outright criminal greed.⁴⁸

Hezbollah controlled its organization via a consultative council of mostly religious leaders called the *Majlis al-Shura*. The council supervised seven committees which focused on ideological, financial, military, political, judicial, informational, and social affairs operations.⁴⁹ Each of these seven committees was replicated in Hezbollah's three areas of control (Bekaa Valley, Beirut, and southern Lebanon).⁵⁰ Additionally, two Iranians from either the Pasdaran or the Iranian embassy participated in the council's decision-making and the overall strategic planning and decision-making.⁵¹ At times, Hezbollah seemed so synched with Iranian ideology and guidance that critics considered them an organizational extension of Iran and not subject to the traditional internal strife and power struggles within typical irregular resistance organizations, but Hezbollah was far from a monolith.⁵² Although Hezbollah shared a strong common ideology both internally and with Iran which eliminated many possible fractures, Hezbollah still suffered differences of strategy and opinion throughout their existence. They overcame these through the

⁴⁸ Ranstorp, 60-61.

⁴⁹ Ranstorp, 45; Hamzeh, 46.

⁵⁰ Ranstorp, 45.

⁵¹ Ranstorp, 45.

⁵² Ranstorp, 58-59.

strength of their underlying clerical network rather than blind followership of Iranian foreign policy.⁵³

In February of 1985, Israel withdrew to south of the Litani River. Also in February 1985, Hezbollah publicly announced its existence, vision, and mission in its "open letter" and the formation of its military wing- the Islamic Resistance. By June, Israel completed its withdrawal to a "security zone." The zone's supposed purpose was to establish a geographic buffer upon the northern border of Israel, but it still consisted of 10% of Lebanon's territory and provided justification for the continued resistance of Hezbollah.⁵⁴

The Israeli withdrawal to its security zone created a security vacuum. Palestinian guerrillas began returning to refugee camps, and AMAL fought to prevent the PLO's return. Hezbollah supported the PLO for its resistance of Israel and as the civil war continued, fought against AMAL for the next three years in the "war of the camps."⁵⁵

In February 1988, Hezbollah was accused of kidnapping Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins, a UN peacekeeper. This kidnapping sparked an open conflict between AMAL and Hezbollah which came to be known as the "War for Supremacy of South Lebanon."⁵⁶ Initially, AMAL cleared Hezbollah from south Lebanon, a region which to that date had been largely supportive of AMAL. The fighting spread to the Beirut

⁵³ Ranstorp, 58-59.

⁵⁴ Norton, 2007, 81.

⁵⁵ Jaber, 32; Norton, 2007, 72-73; Ranstorp, 50.

⁵⁶ Jaber, 34. See also: Ranstorp, 54.

suburbs, but Hezbollah won these skirmishes, and by the end of 1988, Hezbollah had regrouped and re-invaded southern Lebanon.

Syria and Iran ultimately intervened to stop the fighting. Syria had troops occupying Lebanon and the ability to militarily destroy Hezbollah.⁵⁷ Realizing this, Hezbollah made the prudent decision to utilize politics and diplomacy to convince Syria's President Assad that Hezbollah existed as a resistance force against Israeli occupation, and that they did not have an interest in forming "Islamic cantons in the South."⁵⁸ For this, Hezbollah gained rights to return to south Lebanon to continue its war of liberation against Israeli occupation.

The year 1989 proved to be a pivotal one for Hezbollah. In January, they signed the "Damascus Agreement" to end their war with AMAL. In June, Ayatollah Khomeini died which initiated a swing in Iranian foreign policy that had a large impact upon Hezbollah. Khomeini's death brought the more pragmatic Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani to power and influence within Iran.⁵⁹ Finally, in October of 1989, Lebanon ended its fourteen year civil war via the Ta'if Accords.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Jaber, 35.

⁵⁸ Jaber, 36.

⁵⁹ R.K. Ramzani, "Iran's Export of the Revolution: Politics, Ends, and Means," in *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact*, ed. John L. Esposito, (Gainesville: The Florida International University Press, 1990), 59.

⁶⁰ The Lebanese Civil War involved fighting amongst numerous sectarian militias. The details of the greater civil war go beyond the scope of this thesis, but during the civil war, Hezbollah fought their rivals in AMAL for control of the populations in their Shia areas in addition to resisting the IDF. With the end of the civil war, Hezbollah remained armed as a resistance force against Israeli occupation while other militias were disarmed.

Hezbollah ultimately became the only sectarian militia which did not disarm in accordance with the Ta'if Accords.⁶¹ Hezbollah was allowed to retain their weapons in order to continue to serve as a resistance force for Lebanon.⁶² During this time period, Hezbollah began to show remarkable improvements in its military prowess.⁶³ In 1991, Hezbollah improved and decentralized its planning and security during operations.⁶⁴ Through decentralization, Hezbollah enabled its subordinate cells to carry out attacks with greater autonomy based upon the intent of the Hezbollah leadership and the local knowledge of the respective cells. This led to an increased number of attacks over time as Hezbollah fighters gained greater experience. In addition to utilizing roadside bombs and suicide car bombers, Hezbollah began conducting reconnaissance, and launching extended raids and assaults against Israeli positions and strongholds in Lebanon while also reducing their casualties through greater security and planned withdrawals.⁶⁵

In addition to its resistance activities, Hezbollah provided services to the populations in their areas as well. In the 1980s, Iran and Hezbollah established several social welfare-related branches within their organization such as the "Relief Committee [RC] of Imam Khomeini" to target the Lebanese population with reconstruction and financial aide, essential services, and education.⁶⁶ The oppressed and

⁶¹ Ranstorp, 53.

⁶² Ranstorp, 51.

⁶³ Jaber, 37.

⁶⁴ Jaber, 37.

⁶⁵ Jaber, 38.

⁶⁶ Hamzeh, 49-68; Ranstorp, 36.

economically deprived Shia community was viewed by Iran and Hezbollah as "fertile ground."⁶⁷ This non-military, economic, and social focus would assist in securing the allegiance of the Shiite population to Hezbollah. The Relief Committee's creation added to a construction organization, *Jihad al-Bina'*, and the Islamic Health Committee (IHC) which both opened in 1984.⁶⁸ These services filled a void left by the inadequate Lebanese government and bolstered the popular support that Hezbollah possessed from its resistance efforts.⁶⁹ When Iran's President Rafsanjani mentored Hezbollah to begin to work as part of the Lebanese government, Hezbollah's popular support assisted them in winning the largest single party block of seats in Lebanon's 1992 parliamentary elections.⁷⁰

E. 1992-2000

With their decision to work within the Lebanese system, Hezbollah secured the ability to apply political pressure from within the Lebanese government.⁷¹ With this political pressure, Hezbollah maintained their right to exist in the enclaves that they controlled.⁷² This enabled Hezbollah to continue to spread south, politically and militarily, to conduct their social welfare and their construction projects, to improve and increase their military proficiency

⁶⁷ Jaber, 147.

⁶⁸ Hamzeh, 48-55; Ranstorp, 58.

⁶⁹ Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2004), 92-3.

⁷⁰ Harik, 2004, 95.

⁷¹ Hamzeh, 112.

⁷² Hamzeh, 112.

against both their rivals and Israel, and to improve their control of the portions of the Lebanese population within their enclaves. Hezbollah was ultimately credited with forcing the withdrawal of Israel from their security zone and Lebanon in May of 2000.⁷³

F. HEZBOLLAH'S IRREGULAR TECHNIQUES

Hezbollah utilized a synergistic strategy to gain control of the under-governed enclaves in Lebanon. Hezbollah used military, political, social, economic, and information operations "primarily aimed at liquidating the foreign presence in Lebanon and building an Islamic order in its areas of control."⁷⁴

1. Military Techniques

Militarily, Hezbollah utilized a well disciplined, protracted, irregular warfare strategy. Through the use of martyrdom operations and guerrilla warfare, Hezbollah focused on forcing the withdrawal of Israeli, U.S., and French troops from their areas.⁷⁵ Additionally, Hezbollah attacked internal threats to include the Lebanese Army and rival militias for the same purpose.⁷⁶

Hezbollah wisely chose to patiently execute a protracted struggle against their Western enemies. Hezbollah and the IRGC spent three years covertly developing

⁷³ Eyal Zisser, "Hizballah: Between Armed Struggle and Domestic Politics," in *Revolutionaries and Reformers: Contemporary Islamist Movements in the Middle East*, ed. Barry Rubin (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 91; Hamzeh, 115.

⁷⁴ Hamzeh, 81. See also: Ranstorp, 39.

⁷⁵ Hamzeh, 83-84.

⁷⁶ Ranstorp, 35.

their guerrillas and supporting auxiliary. From 1982-1985, Hezbollah remained covert; content to operate in the shadows while they trained and built their organization.⁷⁷

Hezbollah grew rapidly because recruits were attracted by Iranian financed salaries and benefits that were not only enticing to impoverished Shia fighters, but also out bid rival militias such as AMAL.⁷⁸ In fact, the pay of Israel's proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA) was indexed against Hezbollah fighters' pay scales.⁷⁹ In addition to their higher pay, Hezbollah guerrillas were offered special benefits such as free education and medical treatment for both the fighters and their families.⁸⁰

Utilizing the sanctuary of the under-governed space of the Bekaa Valley, Hezbollah and their Iranian trainers and advisors spent a minimum of a year teaching new recruits Hezbollah's ideology and culture.⁸¹ During this initial, year long "reinforcement" period, Hezbollah assessed their recruits, and then selected those fighters who displayed appropriate discipline to be party members.⁸² These fighters were then trained for an additional year in martial arts, medical support, and weapons.⁸³ Depending upon their performance during this two year training period, new members were selected for martyrdom operations, "commando or special forces" operations, simpler harassment guerrilla

⁷⁷ Jaber, 51.

⁷⁸ Ranstorp, 36.

⁷⁹ Ranstorp, 36.

⁸⁰ Ranstorp, 36.

⁸¹ Hamzeh, 75.

⁸² Hamzeh, 75.

⁸³ Hamzeh, 71.

operations, or support operations such as surveillance, logistics, and medical support.⁸⁴ Additionally, Hezbollah wisely organized their fighters in a cellular fashion so that "if one is plucked... the others can't be discovered easily."⁸⁵ Hezbollah's command and control (C2) consisted of what can best be described as decentralized C2. Hezbollah's clerical leadership council would reach a consensus on a particular action.⁸⁶ They would then delegate their tasking to a regional Islamic scholar within a certain district.⁸⁷ The execution was then left to the local cells that, upon receiving guidance, would initiate their own reconnaissance and execute their operations based upon their situational awareness of their respective local areas.⁸⁸ These operations coupled with Hezbollah's cellular organization ensured operational security and compartmentalization.⁸⁹

Hezbollah's initial martyrdom attacks focused upon the IDF and the UN troops from the U.S. and France.⁹⁰ These "suicide attacks" are culturally revered by Shia Muslims and created disproportionate psychological effects.⁹¹ Their attacks against the IDF in Tyre, the U.S. embassy, and the U.S. and French barracks attrited their enemies' will. Israel withdrew to its "security zone," and the U.S. and

⁸⁴ Hamzeh, 71.

⁸⁵ Hamzeh, 71.

⁸⁶ Ranstorp, 41.

⁸⁷ Ranstorp, 41.

⁸⁸ Ranstorp, 41.

⁸⁹ Ranstorp, 41.

⁹⁰ Ranstorp, 38-39.

⁹¹ Hamzeh, 83-84.

France withdrew their troops completely leaving even larger portions of Lebanon under-governed.⁹²

Hezbollah also fought to clear their areas of other Lebanese groups to include the Lebanese Army, AMAL, and other rival groups.⁹³ Hezbollah utilized standard guerrilla tactics of ambushes and "quick military engagements."⁹⁴ In 1983, the Lebanese Army attempted to establish state authority in Hezbollah territory in Baalbeck, but Hezbollah fought the Army off and they returned to the safety of their barracks.⁹⁵ Shortly after the arrival of the IRGC, Hezbollah staged a demonstration involving women who stormed the Army's Sheikh Abdullah Barracks and evicted the Lebanese Army, which did not return until invited by Hezbollah almost a decade later.⁹⁶ In the late 1980s, Hezbollah's well trained and well disciplined fighters fought rival militias, especially AMAL's, to force their competitors out of their controlled areas.⁹⁷

Hezbollah eventually expanded their controlled areas from the Bekaa Valley and Baalbeck down to Beirut's southern suburbs where they established a political headquarters for their party in 1984.⁹⁸ Hezbollah finally established control in portions of south Lebanon during their "war of the camps" with AMAL in the late 1980s when they defeated AMAL fighters in skirmishes and secured their space.

⁹² Hamzeh, 83-84, 88.

⁹³ Ranstorp, 35.

⁹⁴ Hamzeh, 87.

⁹⁵ Hamzeh, 100.

⁹⁶ Jaber, 108.

⁹⁷ Norton, 43-44.

⁹⁸ Hamzeh, 88-89; Norton, 43-44.

Overtime, Hezbollah's operations became more sophisticated and more frequent.⁹⁹ In addition to simple harassment ambushes and roadside bombs, Hezbollah began to launch sustained raids into Israeli territory.¹⁰⁰ They enhanced their reconnaissance and security efforts which improved both their force protection and their effectiveness.¹⁰¹ From 1985-1989, Hezbollah's Islamic Resistance launched 100 attacks against the IDF.¹⁰² From 1990-1995, during which time Hezbollah ran members for Parliament and began to operate with the semi-support of the Lebanese state, Hezbollah increased their number of attacks to 1,030.¹⁰³ From 1996-2000, Hezbollah attacked the IDF 4,928 times which led to the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000.¹⁰⁴ So, as time passed, Hezbollah learned from its past operations and improved their effectiveness, at the same time that they substantially increased their guerrilla warfare efforts to establish control in their areas.¹⁰⁵ However, during their protracted struggle, Hezbollah also gained control through non-military means as well.

2. Political Techniques

From the very start of its movement, Hezbollah focused on the Shia populations within their enclaves. Hezbollah political tactics assisted in attaining its overall

⁹⁹ Hamzeh, 89; Jaber, 37-38.

¹⁰⁰ Jaber, 37.

¹⁰¹ Hamzeh, 89-90; Jaber, 37-39; Norton, 2007, 80.

¹⁰² Hamzeh, 89.

¹⁰³ Hamzeh, 89.

¹⁰⁴ Hamzeh, 89-95.

¹⁰⁵ Hamzeh, 88-93; Jaber 37-42.

objectives of establishing control of their enclaves, defeating the IDF, promoting the rights of the Lebanese Shia community, and addressing voids within the Lebanese confessional system.

Hezbollah initiated their political control of their three under-governed areas by building upon the networks of their Najaf-educated, charismatic, clerical leaders who originated from the three geographic areas.¹⁰⁶ Hezbollah tapped into the social capital of its key leaders to establish the necessary roots and inroads into the respective populations. For example, Hezbollah based their growth in the Bekaa Valley upon the networks of two of their founding members Sayyid Abbas al-Musawi and Sheik al-Tufayli, Hezbollah's first secretary general; in Beirut upon the networks of Hezbollah's spiritual guide Sheik Fadlallah and Sheik Hassan Nasserallah, their secretary general since 1992; and finally in south Lebanon upon the networks of the martyred Sheik Rageb Harb.¹⁰⁷

As Hezbollah gained political control inside of their enclaves, they filled additional voids in governance which existed in their controlled areas and enhanced their political control by enacting law enforcement and judicial mechanisms which the failed Lebanese state could no longer provide. Hezbollah's "Engagement Unit" provided policing functions within their enclaves.¹⁰⁸ Hezbollah's "police" maintained order by arresting individuals suspected of murder, robbery, and theft in addition to political offenses

¹⁰⁶ Ranstorp, 33-34.

¹⁰⁷ Ranstorp, 34-40.

¹⁰⁸ Hamzeh, 65.

such as espionage.¹⁰⁹ For those arrested for ordinary crimes, Hezbollah alternated between turning the accused over to the Lebanese government for prosecution and adjudicating them within Hezbollah's "Judicial Unit," depending upon the crime and the political situation existing at varying times between Hezbollah and the Lebanese government.¹¹⁰

Hezbollah's "Judicial Council" consisted of judges and judicial officials and provided rulings on their constituents' violations of Sharia Law.¹¹¹ Hezbollah's judges ruled over civil disputes as well; thus filling a shadow government role for their under-governed spaces and further subverting the Lebanese government.¹¹²

One of the key attributes of Hezbollah over time was its willingness to make use of political mechanisms ranging from diplomacy to working within the Lebanese system. Hezbollah, despite occasional clashes, maintained a turbulent but necessary relationship with Syria.¹¹³ During, Hezbollah's infancy, Syria opted to allow Iran to support Hezbollah within the Bekaa Valley.¹¹⁴ In addition, during the pivotal years of 1989 and 2000, Hezbollah was able to deal with Syria to ensure its survival as a resistance group despite international pressure.¹¹⁵ Hezbollah's decision to act diplomatically gained it much better results than any it

¹⁰⁹ Hamzeh, 65.

¹¹⁰ Hamzeh, 65-69.

¹¹¹ Hamzeh, 69.

¹¹² Hamzeh, 69.

¹¹³ Hamzeh, 26, 102, 108-109, 146-147.

¹¹⁴ Hamzeh, 26.

¹¹⁵ Jaber, 32-35.

could have achieved by remaining inflexible in its diplomacy with its off and on enabler, Syria.

As noted earlier, Hezbollah faced a watershed year in 1989 for two significant political reasons. Domestically, the Ta'if Agreement sought to end the Lebanese Civil War and internationally, Ayatollah Khomeini died; thus greatly impacting the level of political, financial, and military support available to Hezbollah.¹¹⁶

In accordance with its "open letter" manifesto, Hezbollah sought to establish an Islamic state, but the political reality in Lebanon in 1989 called for a different, more pragmatic track.¹¹⁷ Here is where Hezbollah made a decision vital to its survival as an organization. By opting to follow a pragmatic course in lieu of its previous extremist efforts not to support the Lebanese state, Hezbollah enabled itself to remain armed as a recognized resistance group.¹¹⁸

By following Iran's mandate to participate in the 1992 parliamentary elections, Hezbollah placed itself within the Lebanese system which it shunned for so long, but at the same time, provided itself with an opportunity to ensure its own survival as a resistance organization when other militias were being disarmed across Lebanon. By working within the system, Hezbollah was able to manipulate the system to its benefit.¹¹⁹ Hezbollah's shift from extremism

¹¹⁶ Simon Haddad, "A Survey of Lebanese Shi'i Attitudes Towards Hezbollah," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 16:3 (2005): 321; Norton, 2007, 98-101; Norton, 2000, 28; Norton, 1999, 3; Zisser, 93-94.

¹¹⁷ Hamzeh, 108-112.

¹¹⁸ Hamzeh, 108-112.

¹¹⁹ Ranstorp, 58.

to pragmatism in its politics and diplomacy proved vital to its survival and legitimacy, both domestically and internationally.¹²⁰

3. Social Techniques

From the beginning of its resistance, Hezbollah focused heavily on social mechanisms to improve the daily existence of the populations within their controlled areas.¹²¹ The historic lack of essential services in Shia regions, the damage caused by Israeli attacks as well as by factional fighting between internal groups such as AMAL, the PLO, and Hezbollah, and the collapse of the Lebanese state's ability to provide for its citizens left a huge void for Hezbollah and their Iranian supporters to fill.¹²² These social efforts bolstered Hezbollah's legitimacy with the Lebanese population. These social efforts also helped to offset Hezbollah's loss of legitimacy with portions of the population who disliked Hezbollah for their extremist Islamic governance of their areas or the harsh treatment which the Shia of southern Lebanon suffered due to the Israeli punishment tactics against Lebanese citizens for their support of Hezbollah and other resistance organizations.¹²³

¹²⁰ Hamzeh 108-112; Norton, 1999, 2000, 2007, Zisser; Hajjar.

¹²¹ Ranstorp, 39; Haddad, 322.

¹²² Hamzeh, 53-54.

¹²³ Assaf Kfoury, "Hizb Allah and the Lebanese State" in *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report*, ed. Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 141; Hamzeh, 49.

In 1988, Hezbollah established its Holy Struggle Construction Foundation, also known as *Jihad al-Bina'*.¹²⁴ Hezbollah built and repaired homes, shops, hospitals, infirmaries, mosques, and cultural centers in its controlled areas of Bekaa, the south Beirut suburbs, and southern Lebanon.¹²⁵ They provided electricity, paved roads, managed sewage systems, collected garbage, dug wells, and trucked in water to the needy.¹²⁶

Hezbollah also built and repaired schools in their controlled areas.¹²⁷ Hezbollah viewed illiteracy and ignorance as one of the causes of the lack of social and political progress in Lebanon.¹²⁸ Hezbollah used its construction assets to build and refurbish schools in remote villages and towns. Between 1988 and 1994, Hezbollah's construction department refurbished twenty-four schools in the Bekaa Valley and southern Lebanon.¹²⁹ Lebanon does not have free education, but Hezbollah provided reduced rates, education subsidies for the poor, and provided something that the Lebanese government could not.¹³⁰

Hezbollah provided outstanding medical support to the Lebanese in their areas. Hezbollah's Islamic Health Unit operated pharmacies, medical and dental clinics, and even hospitals in support of their fighters and their

¹²⁴ Hamzeh, 49; Norton, 2007, 110.

¹²⁵ Hamzeh, 50; Zisser, 94-95.

¹²⁶ Kfoury, 142; Jaber, 156, Zisser, 94-95; Hamzeh, 51-52.

¹²⁷ Jaber, 162; Hamzeh, 55-58.

¹²⁸ Jaber, 162.

¹²⁹ Jaber, 163.

¹³⁰ Jaber, 163; Hamzeh, 57.

constituents in their controlled areas.¹³¹ Hezbollah constructed two hospitals, in Baalbeck and in Beirut's southern suburbs, and operated medical clinics dispersed throughout their controlled areas.¹³² In addition, Hezbollah deployed mobile clinics to villages located along the border of Israel's security zone providing medical coverage to civilians who did not want to travel frequently for fear of being caught in the fighting in that dangerous area.¹³³ All of these services stood in contrast to the lack of support provided by the Lebanese government, the IDF, or groups such as AMAL, who provided support, but less than that provided by Hezbollah.¹³⁴

In all, Hezbollah's social mechanisms in areas such as construction, education, and medical services focused on the populations in their enclaves and provided government -like services that the Lebanese State, the IDF, and rivals such as AMAL, could not or would not provide.

4. Economic Techniques

"The Lebanese government was happy to let Hezbollah take responsibility for the Shiites' welfare."¹³⁵ Hezbollah and its external supporter, Iran, saw an opportunity to fill yet another void left by the failed Lebanese government and exploited this opportunity by channeling millions of dollars

¹³¹ Hamzeh, 54; Zisser, 94; Kfoury, 141.

¹³² Kfoury, 142; Jaber, 158.

¹³³ Jaber, 158.

¹³⁴ Judith Palmer Harik, "Between Islam and the System: Sources and Implications of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hizballah," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40:1 (1996): 45; Hamzeh, 55.

¹³⁵ Jaber, 148.

of aid and financial assistance into a robust social welfare system for the Shia population.¹³⁶ In 1987, Ayatollah Khomeini launched a social welfare program within Lebanon. "In a clear reprimand to Israel and the West, Khomeini hoped that the organization 'would alleviate the pain of the Lebanese oppressed" who had suffered from Israeli occupation and the Lebanese Civil War.¹³⁷

In addition to Iranian funds, Hezbollah also collected money domestically through *zakat* and *khoms*, which are religious taxes on assets and income.¹³⁸ Hezbollah also ran collection boxes in their neighborhoods.¹³⁹ Hezbollah provided home and small business loans. Hezbollah established a Martyrs Foundation to care for the families of its deceased fighters.¹⁴⁰ This likely provided psychological benefits to its fighters to know that their families would be provided for upon their death in martyrdom or guerrilla operations.

The social and economic mechanisms which Hezbollah chose to employ simultaneously with its military operations built a lasting loyalty for the group within the Shia community.¹⁴¹ A survey from 1993 suggested that Hezbollah possessed support within their controlled areas based upon their available funds and "tight organization" which

¹³⁶ Jaber, 147; Hamzeh, 49-65; Ranstorp, 39.

¹³⁷ Jaber, 147

¹³⁸ Hamzeh, 63-64.

¹³⁹ Jaber, 151.

¹⁴⁰ Hamzeh, 52.

¹⁴¹ Harik, 1996, 55-56; Haddad, 320. See also: Hamzeh, 55-57; Zisser, 141-143.

"permitted a wide distribution of benefits."¹⁴² The study went on to predict that when compared to resource provision levels from the Lebanese government and AMAL, Hezbollah's programs would "continue to facilitate Islamist penetration of the domains of other power contenders and [would] permit the Party of God to woo the considerable uncommitted portion of the Shiite community."¹⁴³ This trust, built upon a decade of support, added to Hezbollah's legitimacy.

5. Informational Techniques

Hezbollah furthered its legitimacy, influence, and control in its enclaves and throughout greater Lebanon and the Levant through its use of information operations such as public affairs and propaganda. Initially, Hezbollah spread its influence and gained support and resources through its grass roots interaction with the Shia population. As time passed, Hezbollah's use of the media played an integral part in its resistance of Israel's occupation and its more permanent legitimacy within the Lebanese system.¹⁴⁴

As Hezbollah organized and fought to gain control of its enclaves from 1982 to 1992, Hezbollah used word of mouth to influence target populations. One of Hezbollah's strengths in the information realm came from its clerical leadership who by the nature of their occupation had oratory and written skills. Much of the original clandestine recruitment and propaganda appears to have taken place in mosques and in *Husseiniyahs*, which are Shiite social and

¹⁴² Harik, 1996, 62.

¹⁴³ Harik, 1996, 62.

¹⁴⁴ Hamzeh, 58-61. Hamzeh writes that Hezbollah ultimately fielded one TV station, four radio stations, and five newspapers and journals.

religious centers, during sermons and secret meetings.¹⁴⁵ This would mimic the conditions under which many of Hezbollah's lead clerics received their training alongside religious leaders such as Ayatollah Khomeini in religious centers such as Najaf, Iraq and Qom, Iran in the 1970s.¹⁴⁶

Hezbollah also used media to spread its influence. In 1984, Hezbollah launched a weekly newspaper, *Al-Ahed*. In 1985, Hezbollah decided to publicly announce its existence via its "open letter."¹⁴⁷ In this document, Hezbollah laid out its ideology in an effort to gain legitimacy and support. During the "war of the camps" in the late 1980s, Hezbollah launched, *Al-Nour*, its radio station.¹⁴⁸ In 1991, Hezbollah launched *Al-Manar*, which aired news bulletins, political commentaries, and footage of resistance activities aimed to bolster the morale of the Lebanese and attrit the morale of the Israelis.¹⁴⁹

Through its use of local, grass roots, interpersonal interaction with its target populations and its use of multi-media public affairs, Hezbollah greatly enhanced its stature both domestically with its constituents and internationally within the greater Arab community.

G. TECHNIQUES TO AVOID

Hezbollah successfully established control of under-governed spaces within Lebanon and provided Israel its first

¹⁴⁵ Jaber, 21.

¹⁴⁶ Jaber, 26; Hamzeh, 18-19; Norton, 2007, 31.

¹⁴⁷ Norton, 2007, 35-41; Hamzeh, 26-27.

¹⁴⁸ Jaber, 42.

¹⁴⁹ Hamzeh, 58-59.

military defeat while at the same time politically, socially, and economically bolstering its supporting population. Unfortunately, Hezbollah also performed or enabled the performance of acts which many in the international community viewed as illegitimate terrorist attacks. Accusations of suicide bombing, hostage-taking, and hi-jacking of airplanes have kept Hezbollah labeled as a terrorist organization for over two decades, and no matter how much money Hezbollah raises and donates to the needy within their controlled areas, they will not shake the negative association of those terrorist acts within portions of the greater international community.¹⁵⁰ Hezbollah also lost legitimacy in the mid-1980s when it attempted to enforce Islamic order and practice the Sharia within its controlled areas.¹⁵¹ Upon arriving in the South, Hezbollah banned the sale of alcohol in shops and restaurants and prohibited parties, dancing, and loud music.¹⁵² This extremism only served to further the economic isolation of southern Lebanon because it hurt tourism and commerce in the area.¹⁵³

As Hezbollah learned and evolved in its operations between 1982 and 2002, it distanced itself from politically unpopular terrorist activities and attempted to follow "rules of the game" where Hezbollah consciously attempted to

¹⁵⁰ For example, Hezbollah still resides on the U.S. State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. U.S. State Department Office of Counterterrorism, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," U.S. State Department, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/37191.htm> (accessed September 26, 2007).

¹⁵¹ Ranstorp, 35; Jaber, 29-30.

¹⁵² Jaber, 29.

¹⁵³ Jaber, 30.

target only Israeli soldiers and their proxy Christian militiamen and to avoid civilian casualties.¹⁵⁴ Though Hezbollah continued to launch rockets into Israel in tit-for-tat responses to attacks on their civilian populations, Hezbollah proved much more successful at avoiding causing civilian casualties than the heavier handed IDF.¹⁵⁵

Hezbollah also became more sensitive to their constituents over time and loosened their strict Islamic governance of their controlled areas by allowing more liberal clothing wear and limiting the amount of religious instruction in its schools while focusing on secular topics such as math, sciences, and foreign languages (to include English).¹⁵⁶

H. IRANIAN REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS

Over the span of 18 years, Hezbollah rose from a small group of obscure clerics to a force which overwhelmed rival factions and Israeli Defense Forces to gain control of their under-governed enclaves and force the withdrawal of Western forces from Lebanon. Through elections, members of Hezbollah's political wing became a part of the Lebanese state. However, Hezbollah did not do all of this alone. They had help from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC. The techniques used by the IRGC to influence and control Hezbollah provide examples of tactics, techniques, and procedures for operating by, with, and through irregular forces.

¹⁵⁴ Norton, 2007, 83-88; Norton, 2000, 29-30.

¹⁵⁵ Norton, 2007, 83-88; Norton, 2000, 29-30.

¹⁵⁶ Ziad Hashem, Lebanese Army Officer, in discussions with the author on 12 May 2007 in Monterey, California.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps originated as a non-clerical militia tasked to consolidate Khomeini's Islamic Revolution in 1979.¹⁵⁷ The IRGC soon expanded its organization to include military tasks carried out initially in support of the Iran-Iraq War and irregular warfare tasks aimed at conducting unconventional warfare to export the Islamic Revolution.¹⁵⁸ Shortly after the IDF invaded Lebanon, the IRGC deployed elements of its Pasdaran into a base in Zebdani, Syria and up to 1,500 military trainers, advisors, and clerical propaganda specialists into the Bekaa Valley.¹⁵⁹ The IRGC and its surrogates turned the sanctuary of the Bekaa Valley into "a no-man's-land, cut off from the rest of the country. It... turned into a miniature Iranian republic, where the doctrine of the Guards, Khomeini and Shiite clerics reigned."¹⁶⁰

The IRGC utilized a protracted and indirect approach inside of Lebanon by focusing their efforts towards organizing, training, and equipping Hezbollah guerrillas over the course of the next decade rather than leading them in guerrilla warfare against the IDF, rival militias, and the Lebanese government.¹⁶¹ Additionally, some elite elements of Hezbollah were reportedly exfiltrated to Iran to attend Islamic revolutionary training camps.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Kenneth Katzman, *The Warriors of Islam: Iran's Revolutionary Guard* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 31-32, 166; Jaber, 109.

¹⁵⁸ Katzman, 10-11.

¹⁵⁹ Ranstorp, 34.

¹⁶⁰ Jaber, 108.

¹⁶¹ Ranstorp, 34; Kfoury, 137; Jaber, 109; Norton, 1990, 125-126; Norton, 1999, 11; Hamzeh, 71-72.

¹⁶² Hamzeh, 72.

In addition to the military training of the IRGC, imported Iranian clerics went door to door within Hezbollah's controlled areas proselytizing about Islamic tenets and the teachings and doctrines of Khomeini to local villagers.¹⁶³ The clerics utilized their propaganda to build legitimacy and gain recruits for Hezbollah.

Finally, the IRGC utilized many of the same techniques that it used to consolidate control and gain legitimacy for Khomeini's regime inside Iran after their revolution. As the IRGC consolidated control within Iran after the revolution, it not only established physical control of the Iranian population, but also sought to shore up support and build legitimacy through the use of social and economic foundations.¹⁶⁴ These foundations provided social welfare, redistributed land, and extended the regime's authority into rural areas by building rural infrastructure and providing economic support to Iranian peasants and the urban lower class.¹⁶⁵

The IRGC advisors exported these non-military techniques to Lebanon where they gained support and recruits for Hezbollah and the IRGC by "establishing schools, hospitals, mosques, and welfare organizations" inside Hezbollah's controlled areas.¹⁶⁶ The IRGC also used substantial Iranian funds to support Hezbollah cash subsidies for the poor in their enclaves.¹⁶⁷ These non-

¹⁶³ Jaber, 108; Ranstorp, 35.

¹⁶⁴ Katzman, 41-42.

¹⁶⁵ Katzman, 41-42.

¹⁶⁶ Katzman, 96.

¹⁶⁷ Ranstorp, 36.

military strategies helped to overcome the costs of imposing strict Islamic rules upon the population within Hezbollah's controlled areas. Despite the distaste felt by more secular portions of the population, the support aimed at the population provided a genuine help to the oppressed Lebanese Shia and rural and urban poor.

Over the course of a decade, the IRGC provided military training and support coupled with political, social, economic, and informational support to Hezbollah's fighters and their surrounding populations. This protracted and indirect strategy provided integral assistance to Hezbollah and ultimately led to the withdrawal of Israeli Defense Forces and the IDF's proxy militia, as well as the long-term political control and legitimacy of Hezbollah's irregular forces within under-governed spaces in Lebanon.

I. CONCLUSION

When the Lebanese Civil War led to the collapse of the Lebanese state in 1975, and Israel occupied Lebanon in order to disrupt PLO attacks, Hezbollah established control of under-governed spaces in the Bekaa Valley, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and in parts of south Lebanon. To do so, Hezbollah chose to pursue a protracted, irregular warfare strategy which involved not only synergistic combinations of military, social, economic, political, and informational techniques, but additionally a display of astute pragmatism, adjustment, and learning ability which allowed it to change

with its environment and become increasingly more effective over time in support of its target populations and in combat against its enemies.¹⁶⁸

The Iranian Republican Guard Corps proved that a protracted and indirect strategy of sustained, long-term military training, advice, and support of irregular surrogates when coupled with liberal amounts of political, informational, social, and economic mechanisms can facilitate both the needs of surrogates and those of their external supporters.

¹⁶⁸ Ranstorp, 52.

III. RISE OF THE TALIBAN

A. INTRODUCTION

In 1994, the Taliban rose from the lawless environs of southern Afghanistan to become the central authority inside Afghanistan until their defeat by the Northern Alliance and their U.S. sponsors in the fall of 2001.¹⁶⁹ The Taliban utilized relatively conventional military operations, along with rudimentary social, economic, political, and informational methods to seize control of under-governed space throughout 90% of Afghanistan.¹⁷⁰ The Taliban received training, advice, and support from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) which served both the Taliban's and Pakistan's needs.¹⁷¹ Therefore, this case study can provide examples of irregular techniques for controlling under-governed space as well as tactics, techniques, and procedures for operating by, with, and through irregular forces. In order to fully understand the rise of the Taliban one must appreciate the contemporary history of Afghanistan.

¹⁶⁹ Gilles Dorronsoro, *Revolution Unending: Afghanistan: 1979 to the Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 278-279.

¹⁷⁰ Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2002), 285; Adam Garfinkle, "Afghanistanding." *Orbis*, (1999): 405; Dorronsoro, 250.

¹⁷¹ Anthony Davis, "How the Taliban Became a Military Force," in *Fundamentalism Reborn: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 44-71; Ahmed Rashid, "Pakistan and the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 84-88.

B. AFGHANISTAN'S COLLAPSE

Fourteen years of Soviet occupation and Afghan civil war decimated the state of Afghanistan. In April of 1992, Mujahideen resistance parties took partial control of Afghanistan; however, the government formed by the Mujahideen failed to stabilize the country. Tajik and Uzbek forces under Burhanuddin Rabbani, Ahmed Shah Massoud, and Rashid Dostum seized power which almost immediately fomented a subsequent civil war from Pashtun parties who had traditionally ruled Afghanistan.¹⁷² The civil warfare between 1992 and 1994 "eventually wreaked as much if not more damage and destruction on the country than the Soviet invasion and occupation."¹⁷³

By summer of 1994, the government of Afghanistan had disintegrated. The state was divided into fiefdoms where warlords formed and betrayed alliances as they fought for control of Afghanistan and its resources.¹⁷⁴ Prior to the rise of the Taliban, the Tajik party of Jamiyat-i Islami of President Rabbani and General Massoud controlled Kabul and largely Tajik areas to the northeast through the Panahir Valley to Kunduz. Rabbani's government was the internationally recognized government of Afghanistan, but did not have effective political control beyond Jamiyat's controlled areas. Throughout the remainder of the state,

¹⁷² Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene, 2001), 21; Amin Saikal, "The Rabbani Government, 1992-1996," in *Fundamentalism Reborn: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 29; Tanner, 277.

¹⁷³ Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "Understanding the Taliban and Insurgency in Afghanistan." *Orbis*, (2007): 73.

¹⁷⁴ Rashid, 2001, 21; Tanner, 277-279; Dorronsoro, 240-245.

various warlords and former Mujahideen parties controlled different areas where they provided varying degrees of security and governance to the populations in their respective areas.¹⁷⁵ Rashid Dostum's Uzbek Jombesh-I Melli controlled northern areas of the country. The Hazaran party of Hezb-i Wahdat held a foothold in Kabul and controlled the central Hazarajat region west of the Hindu Kush. The warlord Ismail Khan controlled the western portion of the state centered on Herat. In the east on the Pakistan border, an independent *shura* (council) controlled three Pashtun provinces centered on Jalabad, and Gulbuddin Hikmetyar's fighters in Hezb-i Islami controlled a small region to the south and east of Kabul.¹⁷⁶ Finally, in the south around Qandahar, internecine fighting between local warlords had created a region of lawlessness where opium production, extortion, rape, and murder resulted from the chronic insecurity.¹⁷⁷ In sum, Afghanistan clearly met the definition of under-governed space with an absence of a central government able to politically control its population and the presence of lawlessness, insurgency, and irregular non-state actors. The situation would change with the emergence of the Taliban.

¹⁷⁵ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 106.

¹⁷⁶ Rashid, 2001, 21.

¹⁷⁷ Barnett R. Rubin, "Afghanistan under the Taliban." *Current History* 98, no. 625 (1999): 80; Rashid, 2001, 21; Tanner, 278-279; Dorronsoro, 246.

C. THE TALIBAN

During the mid-19th century in British India, the Deobandi religious movement arose to "reform and unite Muslim society as it struggled to live within the confines of a colonial state ruled by non-Muslims."¹⁷⁸ Education was viewed as a key in the spread of this movement and the Deobandis set up *madrassahs* (religious schools) throughout British India; Afghans arrived to study as well.¹⁷⁹ Deobandi *madrassahs* developed extremely fast in Pakistan upon its creation in 1947.¹⁸⁰ The Deobandis created the Jamiat-e-Ulema (JUI) movement to mobilize their followers and in 1962, the JUI became a political party inside of Pakistan.¹⁸¹ Through the years of the Soviet Afghan War, the JUI set up hundreds of *madrassahs* in the Pashtun belt in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Baluchistan.¹⁸² These schools offered young Pakistanis and Afghan refugees free education, food, shelter, and military training, and by the early 1990s, had trained a whole generation of Afghan youth for the post-Soviet period.¹⁸³ Additionally, Pakistan had funded *madrassahs* of all sectarian persuasions and by 1988 "there were 8,000 *madrassahs* and 25,000 unregistered ones, educating over half a million students."¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁸ Rashid, 2001, 88.

¹⁷⁹ Rashid, 2001, 88.

¹⁸⁰ Rashid, 2001, 89. Deobandi *madrassahs* existed in Afghanistan, but they were not extremely popular "even in the Pashtun belt."

¹⁸¹ Rashid, 2001, 89.

¹⁸² Rashid, 2001, 89.

¹⁸³ Rashid, 2001, 89.

¹⁸⁴ Rashid, 2001, 89. See also: Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 171-173, 180.

The Taliban rose from these roots. The Taliban leadership had been educated under the Deobandi ideology; many in JUI sponsored *madrassahs*. The Taliban originated from the Jamiyat-i Taliban, a subsidiary of the Mujahideen political party Harakat-i Engelab, where they formed ties with Pakistan's ISI.¹⁸⁵ When Engelab later collapsed, the Taliban maintained their links with the JUI in Pakistan and access to soldiers from the *madrassah* students of Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹⁸⁶

By 1994, the conditions were set for an irregular force to begin to seize control of the under-governed spaces in Afghanistan. The Taliban intended to "restore peace, disarm the population, enforce Sharia law, and defend the integrity and Islamic character of Afghanistan."¹⁸⁷

D. 1994-1998

Though the precise order remains unclear, several key events have entered the history books as initial components of the rise of the Taliban.¹⁸⁸ In the spring of 1994, at the bequest of his neighbors, Mullah Omar is reported to have enlisted 30 of his *talibs* to rescue two local girls held captive by a local warlord, and to have seized arms and ammunition.¹⁸⁹ Several months later, Omar and the Taliban are reported to have freed a young boy being fought over by

¹⁸⁵ Steve LeVine, "Helping Hand: Where Did the Taliban Come From? How Did They Finance the Drive to Impose an Islamic State?" *Newsweek*, October 13, 1997. <http://www.rawa.org/newsweek.htm> (accessed on September 9, 2007); Dorronsoro, 245.

¹⁸⁶ Dorronsoro, 245.

¹⁸⁷ Rashid, 2001, 22.

¹⁸⁸ Davis, 46; Rashid, 2001, 25.

¹⁸⁹ Rashid, 2001, 25; Tanner, 279.

two more local commanders.¹⁹⁰ The Taliban then reportedly received additional requests for assistance to provide order around Qandahar; and the Taliban began to grow in numbers.¹⁹¹

Meanwhile, after supporting the extremist Gulbiddin Hekmatyar and his Pashtun Hezbi-i Islami party since the Soviet Afghan War and not meeting its goals, Pakistan changed its foreign policy. In an attempt to open a trade route from Pakistan through Qandahar and Herat to Turkmenistan, Pakistan's new Minister of the Interior, General Nasrullah Babar, a Pashtun, employed the Taliban, whom he had established links with through the JUI, the ISI, and his time in the 1970s as the Governor of the NWFP, to assist him.¹⁹²

The Taliban successfully attacked the frontier outpost of Spin Boldak along the Quetta-Qandahar road and seized an enormous arms depot including 18,000 small arms as well as ammunition and heavy weapons enabling the Taliban to arm large numbers of fighters.¹⁹³ Next, Pakistan reportedly attempted to transit a large 30 vehicle convoy loaded with medicine, consumer goods, and food from Quetta through Qandahar and Herat to Turkmenistan.¹⁹⁴ The convoy was halted on the outskirts of Qandahar by local warlords who demanded payment to pass through their areas. Two ISI officers and two Taliban commanders were on board the

¹⁹⁰ Rashid, 2001, 25.

¹⁹¹ Tanner, 279.

¹⁹² Dorransoro, 244-245; Davis, 44-45.

¹⁹³ Dorransoro, 245; Davis, 45-46; Tanner, 279; Rashid, 2001, 27-28.

¹⁹⁴ Davis, 47; Rashid, 2001, 28; Tanner, 279.

convoy, and the Taliban were called for assistance.¹⁹⁵ Taliban reinforcements freed the convoy in early November, and over the next two days, seized the city of Qandahar and the nearby airport where they gained control of fighter planes and transport helicopters.¹⁹⁶

The Taliban then cleared the roads of check points from Qandahar to the border and began charging a single toll from transporters traveling through their area.¹⁹⁷ Meanwhile, thousands of Afghan and Pakistani Pashtun volunteers from Pakistani JUI *madrassahs* rushed to Qandahar to become members of the new Islamic movement in Afghanistan, and by December 1994, 12,000 students had joined the Taliban.¹⁹⁸

In 1995, the Taliban, with the support and advice of the ISI, began to seize control of Afghan provinces on two fronts. They fought towards Kabul to the north and Herat to the west. The Taliban had shifted from a provincial force, establishing security in and around Qandahar, to a regional force attempting to impose Sharia law and disarm Mujahideen 'criminals' across Afghanistan.¹⁹⁹

The Taliban were able to rapidly gain control of areas in the Pashtun dominated south, as they used their ISI supported military prowess, existing social and religious networks, and subversion to their advantage. With each of these victories, the Taliban seized increasing amounts of

¹⁹⁵ Davis, 47-48; Rashid, 2001, 28.

¹⁹⁶ Davis, 48; Rashid, 2001, 28-29; Dorronsoro, 246.

¹⁹⁷ Rashid, 2001, 29.

¹⁹⁸ Rashid, 2001, 29.

¹⁹⁹ Davis, 52.

weapons, tanks, and equipment while swelling their numbers with "re-flagged" soldiers and additional *madrassah* students.

The Taliban finally began to meet significant resistance upon reaching the borders of the heavily Pashtun populated areas. This increased resistance occurred in part due to the distinct cultural fault lines that existed between the Pashtun south and the remainder of the Afghan population who feared Pashtun domination. The Taliban fought and defeated Hekmatyar's Hezb-i Islami militia who were arrayed in a wide arc south of Kabul where they had been fighting for control of Kabul against Rabbani and Massoud. The Taliban then opened the road to Kabul allowing food convoys to reach the capital city after months of blockade imposed by Hekmatyar.²⁰⁰ This was a popular step which raised the Taliban's prestige with Kabul's skeptical citizens and provided the Taliban additional support from the truck transport mafia who transited goods out of Pakistan.²⁰¹

Outside Kabul, the Taliban faced a three-way stand off with the Hazarans of Hezb-i Wahdat and Massoud's government forces.²⁰² The Taliban attempted to negotiate with both entities, but Massoud ultimately attacked Hezb-i Wahdat forces; Hezb-i Wahdat forces attacked the Taliban; and then the government attacked the Taliban.²⁰³ The battle-hardened government fighters of Ahmed Shah Massoud were able to push

²⁰⁰ Rashid, 2001, 34.

²⁰¹ Rashid, 2001, 34.

²⁰² Davis, 56-57.

²⁰³ Davis, 57-58; Rashid, 2001, 34-35.

both the Hazaran and the Taliban militias out of rocket range of Kabul; handing the Taliban their first major setback and leaving Massoud in complete control of Kabul for the first time.²⁰⁴

To the west, the Taliban made significant gains.²⁰⁵ Despite doubts from the ISI, the Taliban leaders opted to exploit gains in the west to offset their failures around Kabul.²⁰⁶ The Taliban used maneuver warfare and subversion to advance towards Herat and Ismail Khan.²⁰⁷ Meanwhile Rashid Dostum also attacked Khan's area from the north east, and in response, the Afghan government shipped 2,000 troops west to reinforce Khan.²⁰⁸ Heavy conventional warfare followed.²⁰⁹ Hindered by poor logistics and ammunition shortages, the irregular forces of the Taliban met with their second significant defeat and lost substantial ground to Khan and the government.²¹⁰

After successive large scale military defeats on two fronts, many people thought that the Taliban were finished as an irregular force.²¹¹ However, the covert support of the ISI in the form of cash, military spare parts, and training in technical skills from former Afghan Communist Army Officers, along with tens of thousands of

²⁰⁴ Davis, 56-59; Rashid, 2001, 35; Tanner, 286.

²⁰⁵ Davis, 59.

²⁰⁶ Davis, 59.

²⁰⁷ Davis, 59.

²⁰⁸ Davis, 59; Rashid, 2001, 36.

²⁰⁹ Davis, 59; Rashid, 2001, 36.

²¹⁰ Davis, 59-60; Rashid, 2001, 36.

²¹¹ Davis, 60; Rashid, 2001, 39.

reinforcements from Pakistan, strengthened the Taliban over the summer of 1995 during a lull in fighting.²¹²

In August of 1995, Khan launched an attack against the Taliban, but was badly beaten by the student army who were now re-trained, advised, and logistically supported by the ISI.²¹³ The Taliban had suddenly shifted to coordinated maneuver warfare in a matter of months; defeating Ismail Khan's fighters and seizing Shindand Airfield and Herat by early September. The counterattack by the Taliban was seen as the turning point of the war and the beginning of the end for the Rabbani government.²¹⁴

The Taliban now controlled an area for the first time that was not predominantly Pashtun. They closed all of the schools, "forcibly implemented their social bans and Sharia law," and handed the administration of the city over to Pashtun administrators who did not speak the local Persian language.²¹⁵ But, the Taliban opened the Qandahar road benefiting the economy, possessed a key air base, and now faced only a one front war.²¹⁶ At the end of 1995, the Taliban attacked towards Kabul again. However, they failed to take the capital and frontlines formed in a stalemate through the winter.

In the spring of 1996, the Taliban held a *shura* of 1,200 religious leaders to discuss Taliban policy.²¹⁷ The

²¹² Coll, 293; Davis, 60-61; Rashid, 2001, 39; Dorronsoro, 252.

²¹³ Dorronsoro, 252; Rashid, 2001, 40; Davis, 62.

²¹⁴ Dorronsoro, 252; Rashid, 2001, 40.

²¹⁵ Rashid, 2001, 40.

²¹⁶ Dorronsoro, 252.

²¹⁷ Rubin, 1999, 81.

Taliban had grown to an extent that it experienced riffs internally. To counter this, the *shura* nominated Mullah Mohammad Omar as *Amir-ul Momineen* (Commander of the Faithful).²¹⁸ This made Omar the supreme leader of the Taliban, and he cemented his control by donning the sacred "Cloak of the Prophet" which gave him religious legitimacy.²¹⁹

As the summer of 1996 passed with the Taliban still stalemated outside Kabul, other warlords such as Hekmatyar and Dostum began to cooperate with the government. With this cooperation came pressure on Massoud to extend his lines out of Kabul to assist Hekmatyar's Hezb-i Islami elements. Like Hekmatyar before them, the Taliban terrorized Kabul with indiscriminate rocket and artillery fire. At the same time, the ISI, with financial backing from Saudi Arabia, provided the support needed by the Taliban to break their stalemate.

The Taliban attacked east using their potent combination of military attack and subversive bribes to seize Jalalabad.²²⁰ The Taliban, advised and supported by the ISI, were then able to press their advantage. They captured Bagram Airfield next and began to approach Kabul rapidly over multiple avenues of approach, again utilizing coordinated maneuver warfare.²²¹ Massoud, unable to stop

²¹⁸ Rashid, 2001, 42.

²¹⁹ Rashid, 2001, 42-43.

²²⁰ Davis, 66.

²²¹ Rashid, 2001, 48; Davis, 68.

the Taliban assault, conducted a holding action and evacuated his forces from Kabul on the night of September 26, 1996.²²²

"Within 24 hours of taking Kabul, the Taliban imposed the strictest Islamic system in place anywhere in the world."²²³ The Taliban banned TV, videos, music, satellite dishes, sports, and even kite flying.²²⁴ The Taliban renamed Radio Kabul to Radio Shariat and took all music off the air.²²⁵ Taliban soldiers stood on main streets enforcing their extreme social standards on male beard length and female dress.²²⁶ Unlike Herat and Qandahar, Kabul contained a large international press corps who publicized the Taliban restrictions.²²⁷

The Taliban established a Kabul *shura* which contained no Kabulis and no one capable of administering a major city or a national government.²²⁸ The Afghan Ministries were in Kabul, yet Mullah Omar governed from Qandahar with associated inefficiencies. On October 10, 1996, the non-Taliban parties of Jamiyat, Hezb-i Wahdat, and Jombesh formed an alliance named the United Islamic Front that would continue the civil war.²²⁹ After capturing Kabul, the Taliban continued to pursue their opponents into non-Pashtun

²²² Tanner, 283.

²²³ Rashid, 2001, 50.

²²⁴ Rashid, 2001, 50; Coll, 333; Tanner, 284.

²²⁵ Rashid, 2001, 50.

²²⁶ Rashid, 2001, 51.

²²⁷ Rashid, 2001, 51.

²²⁸ Rashid, 2001, 51.

²²⁹ Rashid, 2001, 52.

areas, and for the remainder of the decade control of varying portions of north eastern Afghanistan changed hands repeatedly.²³⁰

In 1997, Dostum attempted to defend Mazar-i Sharif, but was subverted when his second in command turned on him, and the Taliban took control of the city.²³¹ The Taliban once again tried to establish their coercive style of control in a relatively modern city which had not experienced warfare to the extent that many of the other cities in Afghanistan had.²³² The Taliban vanguard that captured the city then attempted to disarm the Hazarans in Mazar-i Sharif and sparked a revolt. The Taliban, lacking an in depth situational awareness of their environs, lost 3,000 soldiers who were trapped in the city and killed.²³³

The Taliban finally gained control of Mazar-i Sharif in August 1998, and thus controlled all of the large political centers of Afghanistan and all of the major commerce routes. By this time, the Taliban had also formed rudimentary government ministries and met with the United Nations. Despite all of this, the Taliban government was only recognized diplomatically by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates due to their extreme governance.

E. 1998-2001

The Taliban and Massoud's United Islamic Front continued to fight their civil war until U.S. intervention

²³⁰ Tanner, 284.

²³¹ Tanner, 284.

²³² Coll, 348.

²³³ Tanner, 284; Dorronsoro, 254; Coll, 349.

in the fall of 2001. The Taliban were able to consolidate the areas under their control and perform rudimentary governmental tasks, but they were unable to defeat Massoud who had fallen back upon his home turf in the Panshir Valley and its surrounding mountains.²³⁴

Despite predictions by the international community that the Taliban would eventually "mature into a Saudi-like moderate Islamic government," Mullah Omar fell under the influence of Osama Bin Laden and became more and more extreme in his actions.²³⁵ Omar's and the Taliban's devotion ultimately cost them their government when their Al-Qaeda guests used their Taliban provided sanctuary to plan the attacks of September 11, 2001.

F. TALIBAN'S IRREGULAR TECHNIQUES

The Taliban gained political control of 90% of Afghanistan to include all keys areas of political and economic power through largely conventional military operations against their enemies.²³⁶ Upon establishing control of an area, the Taliban provided security to the population, opened trade routes, and installed local government, but their social actions found legitimacy in rural Pashtun areas only. The Taliban's use of myths and the external support that the Taliban received from Pakistan proved integral to their successes.²³⁷

²³⁴ Dorronsoro, 255.

²³⁵ Coll, 408.

²³⁶ Davis, 43.

²³⁷ Rubin, 1999, 80; Davis, 69.

1. Military Techniques

Militarily, the Taliban gained control of under-governed space through enemy-focused operations involving conventional warfare against state and non-state actors, a large reserve of soldiers, the use of madrassahs and training camps, and the use of political warfare such as subversion and targeted assassinations. Despite their relatively rapid maneuver capabilities, they were hindered at times by a lack of logistics.

By 1992, Afghan warfare had transformed to a more conventional form involving mass, maneuver, and firepower focused on destroying an opponent's military forces.²³⁸ The Soviet retreat left Afghan militias with abundant amounts of heavy weapons. The various factions changed their tactics from those historically based on harassment guerrilla strikes to those involving adversaries massed on actual front lines as they engaged each other with heavy weapons, armor, and artillery.

The Taliban were able to make an additional leap to conduct coordinated maneuver warfare; a vast change made possible by the assistance from the ISI which will be expanded upon below.²³⁹ The Taliban fought three different campaigns, in Herat, Kabul, and Mazar-i Sharif, where they attacked their opponents using rapid fire and maneuver. At their pinnacle, these campaigns included night operations; repeated attacks despite heavy casualties; well coordinated command, control, and logistics; and capable employment of

²³⁸ Dorronsoro, 235-236.

²³⁹ Davis, 68.

aviation, armor, and artillery assets in support of 30,000-35,000 troops functioning in brigade and division structure.²⁴⁰ Their state opponents, to include Ismail Khan, Ahmed Shah Massoud, and Rashid Dostum, were veteran war fighters who were unable to resist the Taliban attacks that occurred with speed and audacity across multiple avenues of approach.²⁴¹

In addition to their fight with the Rabbani government's military forces, the Taliban also attacked and defeated the irregular forces of Gulbiddin Hekmatyar. Hekmatyar and his Hezb-i Islami soldiers had fought Massoud's militia forces from a position outside of Kabul since the fall of the Afghan communist government. Hekmatyar shelled Kabul barbarically for several years, but Massoud had been unable to attack and defeat him due to multiple factors to include the presence of Hezb-i Wahdat and Jombesh forces threatening Massoud's lines around Kabul as well. Conversely, the Taliban were able to attack and severely disrupt Hekmatyar's Hezb-i Islami forces during their effort to establish control over the under-governed spaces in Afghanistan.²⁴² The Taliban cut Hezb-i Islami off from their previous Pakistani support and sent Hekmatyar's forces "in full flight before the Taliban advance."²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Davis, 54, 68-69; Rashid, 2001, 48.

²⁴¹ Warlords such as Ismail Khan and Rashid Dostum displayed varying degrees of support to the central Afghan government as they maneuvered politically and militarily to maintain power over their regional areas.

²⁴² Davis, 53; Tanner, 281.

²⁴³ Dorronsoro, 250.

Hence, in their fight for control of under-governed space in Afghanistan, the Taliban militarily defeated both state and non-state actors.

As the Taliban gained control of Afghanistan from 1994 through 2000, they benefited from extraordinarily deep reserves. The Taliban received additional manpower from several areas. First, the Taliban repeatedly received thousands of recruits from their JUI *madrassah* network.²⁴⁴ When the pool of volunteers ran low, *madrassahs* were shut down to send *talibs* forward as reinforcements.²⁴⁵ Second, the Taliban gained mass from "re-flagged" Taliban. When opposing commanders surrendered or joined the Taliban, their fighters often joined the Taliban as well.²⁴⁶ Third, the Taliban resorted to conscripting young men. For example, the Taliban entered mosques in Kabul in the fall of 1996 and seized worshippers to send forward to fight against Massoud.²⁴⁷ Finally, the Taliban benefited from outsiders such as former Afghan communists from the Khalq Party who joined the Taliban through contacts in the ISI.²⁴⁸

Many of the Taliban gained their ideology and martial prowess in *madrassahs* and training camps, funded and operated by Pakistan's JUI and ISI, where they were prepared psychologically and militarily. Taliban *madrassahs*, located across the Pashtun tribal belt, had invested years towards instilling the Taliban ideology into tens of thousands of

²⁴⁴ Dorronsoro, 303; Rashid, 2001, 29-39; Tanner, 282; Davis, 60-61.

²⁴⁵ Rashid, 2001, 53.

²⁴⁶ Rashid, 2001, 35.

²⁴⁷ Rashid, 2001, 53.

²⁴⁸ Davis, 54-55.

young men preparing them for jihad.²⁴⁹ The Taliban used JUI and ISI run training camps in both Pakistan and Afghanistan to train their fighters. For example, in January 1995, training camps were established at Spin Boldak and Qandahar where recruits from Pakistani *madrassahs* were trained in courses lasting two months.²⁵⁰ At other times the Taliban sent raw recruits straight to the front lines, but during lulls in fighting and after major defeats, the Taliban utilized training camps to enhance their soldiers' skills.²⁵¹

Though the irregular forces of the Taliban used conventional styles of warfare, they conducted political warfare as well. The Taliban used social networks, subversion, and even assassination against their opponents. First, the Taliban leadership used the religious and social networks that they had developed over the past 15 years to extend "feelers" to persuade certain opponents to forego resistance against the Taliban.²⁵² This technique assisted the Taliban in establishing control of Uruzgan and Zabul provinces "with scarcely a shot fired."²⁵³

Second, the Taliban and the ISI used subversion throughout their campaigns to gain an advantage over their enemies or to avoid fighting altogether.²⁵⁴ For example, a key maneuver by the ISI and the Taliban occurred early in

²⁴⁹ Kepel, 225; Rashid, 2001, 32-33.

²⁵⁰ Davis, 54-55.

²⁵¹ Davis, 60.

²⁵² Davis, 50. Barnett R. Rubin, "The Political Economy of War and Peace in Afghanistan." *World Development* 28, no. 10 (2000): 1791.

²⁵³ Davis, 50-51.

²⁵⁴ Rashid, 2001, 35.

the Taliban's existence. While the Taliban still numbered in the hundreds, an ISI agent is reported to have bribed the prominent commander in Qandahar to not resist.²⁵⁵ Mullah Naquib commanded 2,500 men, but surrendered to the Taliban for a "substantial bribe" and "the promise that he would retain his command."²⁵⁶ The Taliban then enlisted his men and persuaded Naquib to leave Qandahar for his home district two months later.²⁵⁷ The Taliban also subverted Rashid Dostum during their campaign to capture control of Mazar-i Sharif when they turned Dostum's deputy, Abdul Malik, in May of 1997.²⁵⁸ Malik sought revenge for Dostum assassinating Malik's brother the previous year.²⁵⁹ Malik's decision-making was assisted by Taliban bribes.²⁶⁰

Third, the Taliban used assassination to consolidate their power and control.²⁶¹ The Taliban assassinated Abdul Ahad Khan Karzai, the leader of the famous Popalzai tribe and father of future Afghan President Hamid Karzai, in Quetta in July 1999. The Taliban also massacred the family of former Mujahideen commander and Taliban rival Abdul Haq in the spring of 1999. Through targeted persuasion, bribes, subversion, and killings, the Taliban were able to eliminate threats to their political control.

Despite many sound military techniques, the Taliban did suffer difficulties as well. Although the Taliban made a

²⁵⁵ Davis, 49; Rashid, 2001, 28-29.

²⁵⁶ Rashid, 2001, 28-29.

²⁵⁷ Davis, 49.

²⁵⁸ Tanner, 284

²⁵⁹ Dorronsoro, 254.

²⁶⁰ Rashid, 2001, 57.

²⁶¹ Dorronsoro, 256.

quantum leap in military capabilities and achieved stunning victories over their rivals, they were hindered at times by their lack of logistics. With the help of the ISI, the Taliban repeatedly overwhelmed their enemies in battle, but they also met defeat due to outrunning their logistics. As an example, in 1995, while attempting to capture Herat and defeat Ismael Khan, the Taliban overextended their lines; ran short of water, food, and ammunition; and met defeat.²⁶² They also lacked medical facilities and left hundreds of wounded Taliban to die in the desert.²⁶³ Addressing these logistical weaknesses represented one of the key capabilities offered by the external support of the ISI. Upon militarily defeating their opponents, the Taliban then had to maintain control of their under-governed spaces. To do so, the Taliban turned to non-military mechanisms.

2. Political Techniques

Through a political structure that changed over time, the Taliban established political control in their areas that was based upon the leadership of Mullah Mohammad Omar and the Taliban interpretation of Islamic governance. The Taliban used police and coercion in cities and towns, but relied more upon local consensus in outlying areas.

Prior to 1994, a social network existed amongst Mullah Omar and other religious leaders who had trained under Deobandi influence in *madrasahs* in Pakistan and Afghanistan. This network had connections to, and was influenced by, both the Pakistani political party of JUI and

²⁶² Davis, 59-60; Rashid, 2001, 36.

²⁶³ Rashid, 2001, 36.

agents of the Pakistani ISI, who had connected with the Taliban leadership during the Afghan Soviet war.²⁶⁴

As the Taliban organized in 1994 and began to seize control of space inside southern Afghanistan, the Taliban formed under the leadership of Mullah Omar and the guidance of a 10 member "supreme" *shura* and a military *shura* both based in Qandahar.²⁶⁵ By 1995, after the capture of Herat, the *shura* was expanded from 35 to 100.²⁶⁶

Mullah Mohammad Omar was "elected" by a large *shura*, consisting of over 1,200 religious leaders, in spring 1996. His election was believed to be based upon the will of Allah rather than for Omar's religious knowledge.²⁶⁷ With the capture of Kabul and the consolidation of the military situation, a more elaborate political structure was formed.²⁶⁸

The Taliban formed the Kabul *shura* under Mullah Rabbani while maintaining a parallel structure in Qandahar.²⁶⁹ The Kabul *shura* became the ministers of the Taliban government with Mullah Rabbani²⁷⁰ serving as the equivalent of a prime minister or head of government, while the parallel *shura* in

²⁶⁴ LeVine.

²⁶⁵ Rubin, 1999, 81.

²⁶⁶ Dorronsoro, 280.

²⁶⁷ Dorronsoro, 279.

²⁶⁸ Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁶⁹ Rubin, 1999, 81.

²⁷⁰ Mullah Rabbani was not related to former Afghan President Rabbani.

Qandahar, reduced back to 10 members, served as Omar's entourage and sometimes as co-members in the Kabul *shura* as well.²⁷¹

The Taliban initially lacked sufficient numbers to occupy the countryside in depth and controlled only towns and main roads.²⁷² For example, in Logar and Ghazni provinces, Taliban *ulema* from Qandahar took over the posts of district officials (*uluswal*), leaving the rest of the district administration in place.²⁷³ With time, the Taliban continued to centralize and set up a local administrative system in areas that they controlled by appointing provincial governors and administrators of districts and cities.²⁷⁴ The Taliban placed their *uluswals* in charge of security and moral enforcement.²⁷⁵

The Taliban interacted with local *shuras* who provided a link between the Taliban and the population and looked after everyday details such as supervising traffic and organizing the local bazaar.²⁷⁶ These councils were essentially elected by the local population.²⁷⁷ The local population chose their mullahs as well, who had a large influence over the councils and the population.²⁷⁸ The Taliban therefore had awareness down to the district and village level, but

²⁷¹ Rubin, 1999, 81.

²⁷² Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁷³ Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁷⁴ Dorronsoro, 281; Rubin, 1999, 81.

²⁷⁵ Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁷⁶ Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁷⁷ Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁷⁸ Dorronsoro, 281.

knew enough to rely upon local tribal and religious leaders to manage their villages in peripheral areas.²⁷⁹

Additionally, the governors, and district *uluswals* were brought in from other areas and initially rotated every few months to prevent internal struggles which could have been facilitated by local leaders remaining in control of one area for an extended period of time.²⁸⁰ Rotation became less rapid as the Taliban regime stabilized, but the principal of appointing governors from outside the respective provinces continued.²⁸¹ These governors brought their own team of officials drawn from their own *qowm*, or solidarity group.²⁸² This enabled the Taliban to appear external to local conflicts and facilitated rapid disarmament of the local population.²⁸³

The only government ministry that the Taliban focused on was its religious police force, *Amir bil-Marooif wa Nahi An il-Munkir* (the department responsible for the 'Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice').²⁸⁴ This robust force re-created the "mental environment of a madrassa... in the villages and cities of Afghanistan."²⁸⁵ The Taliban police were on city streets and inside Afghan districts enforcing order and morality.

²⁷⁹ Bernt Glatzer, "Is Afghanistan on the Brink of Ethnic and Tribal Disintegration?," in *Fundamentalism Reborn: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 177.

²⁸⁰ Rashid, 2001, 99; Dorronsoro, 282.

²⁸¹ Dorronsoro, 282.

²⁸² Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁸³ Dorronsoro, 281.

²⁸⁴ William Maley, "Introduction: Interpreting the Taliban," in *Fundamentalism Reborn: Afghanistan and the Taliban*, ed. William Maley (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 15.

The Taliban based their legislative and judicial systems upon their interpretation of Sharia law. The Taliban established a *shura* of *ulema* which scrutinized all laws to ensure they conformed to their interpretation of Sharia law.²⁸⁶ The Taliban maintained a separate judicial branch by installing *qadis* (judges) in all districts and three levels of jurisdiction in each province- a lower court, a court of appeals, and a higher court.²⁸⁷ These judges did not answer to the governors or the district chiefs.²⁸⁸ Additionally, the *qadis'* judgements frequently went against tribal customs, particularly with outlawing *badal* or revenge through killings for blood vendettas.²⁸⁹

To facilitate the expansion of their political control, the Taliban ran their warfare and their government via taxes upon the licit and illicit transit trade from Pakistan to Afghanistan's other neighbors, the taxation of opium production, and from foreign aid from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and even Osama Bin Laden.

With this structure and funding, the Taliban controlled the population of Afghanistan to varying degrees within their controlled areas. "When taking over an area, the Taliban first [established] law and order by confiscating weapons and imposing a curfew at night. The Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice then [began] to impose Taliban social policies on the

²⁸⁵ Kepel, 30.

²⁸⁶ Dorronsoro, 283.

²⁸⁷ Dorronsoro, 283.

²⁸⁸ Dorronsoro, 283.

²⁸⁹ Dorronsoro, 283.

population."²⁹⁰ Any violators were then punished in accordance with the Taliban's hybrid of Sharia Law and Pashtun custom as determined by Taliban law and the Taliban judicial system.²⁹¹

The Taliban exercised tighter control in the urban areas with their higher population densities through the use of the Taliban's virtue and vice police who were present at the neighborhood level enforcing their social norms. However, the Taliban used an economy of force amongst the southern, rural Pashtun population which shared the Taliban's religious and ethnic beliefs by allowing local tribal elements to manage day to day politics. By governing at the district level, the Taliban had sufficient awareness at the local level to enforce stability and order, but allotted their security forces according to the requirements of the local population.

In sum, the Taliban's political organization shifted from a network form to a hierarchical form, and as the Taliban consolidated control of under-governed space, they maintained their version of law and order down to the local level.²⁹² The Taliban employed a nuanced approach by controlling different demographics of the population

²⁹⁰ Goodson, 123.

²⁹¹ Goodson, 123. Taliban punishments included having victims' family members execute murderers by gun or knife, hanging rapists, amputating the hands and feet of thieves, stoning adulterers, burying homosexuals alive, and publicly humiliating those convicted of lesser crimes.

²⁹² Goodson, 122-124.

according to the degree of control required.²⁹³ While the Taliban chose to provide security, their provision of services was a different matter.

3. Socio-Economic Techniques

As the Taliban expanded their control, they relied upon the popular consensus they gained from their provision of security rather than their provision of services. However, the Taliban security did provide some economic benefit to the population that assisted in building consensus for their political control.

The Taliban were generally uninterested in providing services beyond security and morality.²⁹⁴ "The Taliban continuously insisted that they were not responsible for the population and that Allah would provide."²⁹⁵ Upon seizing Kabul, the Taliban purged the government bureaucracy whose lower levels had remained in place since 1992 and replaced all senior Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara bureaucrats with Pashtuns, whether qualified or not.²⁹⁶ The loss of expertise caused ministries to largely cease to function.²⁹⁷ The Taliban instead relied upon Islamic humanitarian organizations and western Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) to administer food and water distribution and health care in cities such as Kabul; and when the Taliban grew more

²⁹³ Glatzer, 177.

²⁹⁴ Kepel, 229-234.

²⁹⁵ Rashid, 2001, 127.

²⁹⁶ Rashid, 2001, 101.

²⁹⁷ Rashid, 2001, 101.

extreme in their beliefs, politics, and diplomacy, and closed down all NGO offices in 1998, the Taliban government lacked concern.²⁹⁸

Though the Taliban did not fund economic development, portions of the general population did benefit from the control of the Taliban. As trade routes re-opened from Pakistan through to Iran and the Central Asian Republics, service industries such as fuel stations, shops, and tea houses opened in complement.²⁹⁹ Small businesses benefited from the overall security provided by the Taliban as bazaars swelled with goods transited over secure routes, and because shop owners were not heavily taxed or regulated by the Taliban.³⁰⁰

As the Taliban expanded their political control, they provided little in terms of services, but the Afghan population did benefit economically from the stability provided by the Taliban's control. The Taliban's control enabled economic activity to occur and kept commerce routes free from predation. These limited benefits assisted in developing some degree of popular consensus for the Taliban's governance.

4. Informational Techniques

When the Taliban captured Kabul, they banned TV and music, but they retained some forms of "state" sponsored media to influence the population. Of greater impact were

²⁹⁸ Rashid, 2001, 72.

²⁹⁹ Rubin, 2000, 1797.

³⁰⁰ Kepel, 231.

the Taliban's use of myths as a technique to influence the population and gain a form of legitimacy and control.

Upon seizing Kabul, the Taliban renamed Radio Kabul Radio Shariat. The Taliban used this station to disseminate their edicts on social behavior and thus to influence and control the population.³⁰¹ Additionally, the Taliban published a newspaper, *Zarb-i Mu'minin* (Onslaught of the Faithful), without pictures which were forbidden by the Taliban, which could be used to influence the population as well.³⁰² But, their most interesting informational technique involved only word of mouth.

The Taliban's origins are shrouded in myths.³⁰³ The lay person with basic knowledge of the Taliban will likely know that the pious Mullah Omar, fed up with violence and lawlessness, organized his students to rescue girls or boys from being held captive and raped by local warlords. They will also know that the Taliban goal of establishing law and order enabled them to sweep across Afghanistan "without a shot being fired" as warlord after warlord either surrendered to or joined the Taliban.

However, experts and researchers have been unable to locate actual eye witnesses to these Taliban activities. Instead, the Taliban mythology resulted in part from the Taliban themselves emphasizing these themes after they acquired power.³⁰⁴ The Taliban constructed a founding narrative by weaving in stories of Mullah Omar experiencing

³⁰¹ Rashid, 2001, 107.

³⁰² Dorronsoro, 285.

³⁰³ Rashid, 2001, 25.

³⁰⁴ Coll, 283.

visionary dreams for a new Islamic order for Afghanistan.³⁰⁵ The Taliban described Omar's rescue of the abducted girls and Omar's "yen" for popular justice as he hung guilty warlords from tank barrels.³⁰⁶ That the narratives would have a powerful influence on the Afghan population might be expected given their low literacy rate, but the myths spread internationally and became accepted as fact despite evidence to the contrary.

For example, the myth that the Taliban swept across southern Afghanistan on "a wave of popular adulation with scarcely a shot fired" does not match the factual record where, beyond Zabul and Oruzgun provinces, the Taliban fought and fought hard to gain control of the under-governed space in Afghanistan.³⁰⁷

A second myth stated that the areas that the Taliban conquered were overwhelmed by lawlessness and anarchy. Yet, although Qandahar and its environs were indeed lawless, the Taliban also took control of areas like Herat where Ismail Khan had been recognized as having administered to the population through services and schools.³⁰⁸

Through these myths, the Taliban were able to build a sort of prophecy which fellow Pashtuns could then fulfill, by surrendering to the Taliban like everyone else. The fact that these myths spread to where they were then relayed as fact shows the power of these techniques.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁵ Coll, 283.

³⁰⁶ Coll, 283.

³⁰⁷ Davis, 55.

³⁰⁸ Davis, 55.

³⁰⁹ Kepel, 228-229.

G. TECHNIQUES TO AVOID

The Taliban successfully gained control of under-governed space in Afghanistan, but the Taliban's extremism ultimately cost them their international legitimacy. The Taliban received international notoriety when they captured Kabul and proceeded to lock the city down and openly oppress women in the eyes of the local media.³¹⁰ They received further problems when they opted to destroy the 2,000 year old stone Buddhas overlooking Bamiyan. The Taliban's lack of flexibility resulted in the shut down of all NGOs in the country on July 20, 1998 causing humanitarian problems.³¹¹

Additionally, the Taliban failed to control their soldiers when they re-entered Mazar-i Sharif in 1998 and committed genocide against hundreds of Shia Hazarans. The Taliban then refused to budge from their decision to provide sanctuary to Osama Bin Laden even though it cost them their power when the United States launched Operation ENDURING FREEDOM against Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

H. PAKISTAN'S INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE

In the span of two years, the Taliban rose from a small militia employing small arms and numbering in the dozens to a force numbering between 30,000-35,000 fighters. The Taliban operated infantry, aviation, armor, and artillery in brigade-sized operations which overwhelmed rival factions and the Rabbani government, and enabled the Taliban to gain control of under-governed space and the major political and economic centers of Afghanistan. The Taliban became the new

³¹⁰ Rashid, 2001, 113.

³¹¹ Rashid, 2001, 72.

central government, and they had help through all of this from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI. But, how did the ISI influence and control the Taliban to meet Pakistan's needs, and were they successful?

The ISI came to power as an organization within Pakistan during the 1980s as it supported the Mujahideen against the Soviets.³¹² The "Afghan Bureau" existed within the ISI and consisted of ISI officers who spent extensive amounts of time, to include entire careers, working on implementing Pakistani foreign policy within Afghanistan.³¹³ These officers "belonged to border-straddling tribes and could operate undetected in civilian dress along the frontier or inside Afghan territory."³¹⁴ Several of these officers established relationships with key members of the Taliban when they trained them as Mujahideen guerrillas 15 years prior.³¹⁵ These networks enabled the ISI to re-establish contact with their previous students as they began to gain control of under-governed space in Afghanistan.³¹⁶

The ISI were integral in enabling the Taliban to gain control of under-governed space.³¹⁷ The ISI provided extraordinary logistics support, brokered key alliances, and assisted the Taliban in training and operational planning.³¹⁸ The ISI did not control the Taliban though, because the Taliban's ties to Pakistan went far beyond the

³¹² Coll, 180.

³¹³ Coll, 65.

³¹⁴ Coll, 65.

³¹⁵ LeVine.

³¹⁶ LeVine.

³¹⁷ Davis, 69.

³¹⁸ Davis, 69-70.

ISI to the point that the Taliban were able to gain resources from other Pakistani organizations.³¹⁹ Additionally, Pakistan's support of the Taliban resulted in blowback that enabled the "Talibanization" of certain areas of tribal Pakistan.³²⁰

In irregular warfare, logistics often hinders guerrilla organizations. Battlefield capture and external support can assist in overcoming shortages and allow irregular forces to expand and grow. The Taliban grew from a few dozen students to an army consisting of up to 35,000 fighters. Early in their existence, the ISI allowed the Taliban to capture an arms depot which provided it with weapons and equipment for thousands of fighters.³²¹ The ISI also worked with the JUI and local Pakistani *madrassahs* to repeatedly reinforce the Taliban frontlines with thousands and thousands of reinforcements. The ISI supplied the Taliban with spare parts, fuel, ammunition, and new vehicles on a massive scale via links in the Pakistani Transit Mafia.³²² Finally, the ISI bribed many of the Taliban's opponents to convince them not to resist the Taliban attack.³²³

The ready use of bribes certainly persuaded Taliban opponents to forego resistance, but the ISI also linked the Taliban to several key personalities that enabled them to continue to improve their capacity and their capabilities. The ISI linked the Taliban to a large cadre of former

³¹⁹ Rashid, 2001, 181-192.

³²⁰ Rashid, 1998, 88-89.

³²¹ Dorronsoro, 245; Davis, 45-46; Tanner, 279; Rashid, 2001, 27-28.

³²² Davis, 68.

³²³ Davis, 49; Rashid, 2001, 28-29.

communist army officers such as General Shahnawaz Tanai, the former Afghan Defense Minister under President Najibullah.³²⁴ Tanai had launched a failed coup d'état against communist President Najibullah and fled to Pakistan, but returned in the spring of 1995 with a network of former communist army officers from the Khalq Party. These Khalqis were Pashtun and facilitated the quantum leap in military capability that the Taliban made from a small band of irregular fighters to an army of brigades and divisions able to fire and maneuver at night, with coordinated command and control able to synchronize audacious attacks and sustain them during rapid advance.³²⁵ Without this connection, the Taliban may not have survived past their defeat at the hands of Massoud and Ismail Khan in the summer of 1995.³²⁶ The ISI also connected the Taliban with Rashid Dostum, who provided air force technicians to repair Taliban MiG fighters during a lull in fighting, and possibly Jalaluddin Haqqani, the key jihadi leader in eastern Afghanistan who joined the Taliban with thousands of fighters.

The ISI influenced the Taliban by providing them advisors who could assist them in training their fighters in Taliban training camps and in planning and coordinating highly kinetic military operations that enabled the Taliban to defeat their state and non-state rivals. The Taliban ultimately grew beyond the ISI's control, but it appears unlikely that the Taliban could have made the incredibly

³²⁴ Davis, 70.

³²⁵ Davis, 68-70.

³²⁶ Davis, 60.

rapid transformation that they did between 1994 and 1996 without the ISI's control and influence.³²⁷

The Taliban gained power rapidly in a short period. They did this with the help of many Pakistani organizations beyond just the ISI.³²⁸ The Taliban's ties to the transit mafia, key individuals in the Pakistani government such as Minister of the Interior Babar, and the social capital of the JUI enabled the Taliban to operate free from the control of the ISI.³²⁹ Finally, the ISI and Pakistan reaped what it had sown beginning in the 1980s. The Taliban had used the Pakistani tribal areas for so long that a process of "Talibanization" began occurring.³³⁰ The Taliban had established roots in Pakistan which would prevent their control by the ISI. The officers in the ISI Afghan Bureau further enabled this when their prolonged exposure to the Taliban led them to take on the Taliban's agenda in lieu of Pakistan's.³³¹ The ISI made it possible for the Taliban to gain control of under-governed space, but Taliban ties to Pakistan outside of the ISI precluded them from being controlled by their sponsors.³³²

I. CONCLUSION

With the assistance of interpersonal relationships and networks built over two decades, the use of myths, and the external support from Pakistan's ISI, the Taliban were able

³²⁷ Davis, 68-70.

³²⁸ Rashid, 1998, 72.

³²⁹ Rashid, 2001, 183-195.

³³⁰ Rashid, 1998, 88-89.

³³¹ Rashid, 2001, 188.

³³² Davis, 69; Rashid, 2001, 184-185.

to militarily defeat the state and non-state actors existing within Afghanistan between 1994 and 1998 and establish political control of under-governed space. Upon establishing control, the Taliban maintained it by first establishing order. They then opened roads to facilitate limited economic improvement and raised revenue by taxing transit trade and opium production in their areas. The Taliban established a political hierarchy which extended from Mullah Omar through his advisory *shura* and a Kabul *shura* of government ministries to provincial governors and district *uluswals* who were responsible for maintaining order and Taliban morality in their areas. The local leaders maintained control of central areas through the use of their "virtue and vice" police and outlying areas through interaction with local *shuras* consisting of tribal and religious leaders selected from within respective districts by the populations of those areas who appreciated the security provided by the Taliban after so many years of war.

The Taliban ideology of social morality was extreme, especially when viewed through a western lens, and led to the Taliban gaining international notoriety and eventually to their defeat as their government was tied to the Al Qaeda leadership to whom the Taliban had opted to provide sanctuary. Despite predictions that the Taliban would eventually calm their extremist actions, overtime the influence of Al Qaeda and western isolation led in part to Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

The ISI hoped to influence the Taliban to meet the needs of Pakistan's foreign policy and provide Pakistan with "strategic depth" against India, but the Taliban had ties

throughout Pakistan politically, economically, and socially which allowed them to benefit from the ISI's support without letting the ISI control them. With the continuing "Talibanization" of tribal Pakistan, it appears that in the end, it was Pakistan which provided strategic depth to the Taliban.³³³

³³³ Rashid, 2001, 183-185.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes by summarizing the techniques observed in its case studies for how irregular forces established political control of under-governed spaces, and how organizations providing external support to the irregular forces influenced their surrogates. Also from these case studies, additional "lessons learned" about irregular warfare will be identified as well as some suggested implications for USSOCOM, DoD, and the U.S. government which provide some potential topics for future research into additional aspects of irregular warfare.

A. IRREGULAR TECHNIQUES FOR CONTROLLING UNDER-GOVERNED SPACE

From the cases studies of Hezbollah and the Taliban, this study has determined techniques for how irregular forces, with external support, established political control of under-governed space. These cases suggest that to gain control of under-governed space, irregular forces should use a combination of coercion and persuasion. In general, irregular forces will use military operations, involving both guerrilla and conventional warfare, dependent upon their opponents, to disrupt and defeat competitors inside their respective under-governed spaces. As the irregular force disrupts its competitors, it should establish control of the population in its areas through a combination of militia check points and policing operations. The irregular force can enhance its control and legitimacy by providing the populations in its controlled areas with security and services which are adjusted to the cultural expectations of

its target populations. The governance provided may involve only basic security, but it may also include the provision of law enforcement, justice, education, health care, road construction, sanitation, and utilities such as electricity and water. The key to this political control will be the local nature of the governance. Irregular forces will require local, physical control of the population down to the neighborhood and village level. Without this local presence, the irregular force will be unable to fully control its space.

Irregular forces will enhance their influence and control over their target populations through the use of information operations in tune with the local culture. These operations will likely involve a combination of low-tech word of mouth campaigns spread through local religious and social centers, traditional methods via radio broadcasts and newspapers, and hi-tech multi-media campaigns in areas which are plugged into satellite TV and the internet. These information operations should support a chosen narrative which will sell the governance of the irregular force to the population as the irregular force performs actions in support of the narrative.

These cases suggest that these irregular "lines of operations" should be conducted simultaneously. Conventional phasing and sequencing will likely not occur as the irregular force will possess different levels of control in different under-governed areas; and different combinations of military, political, social, economic, and information operations will likely be required in each micro-environment.

These cases show that the "endgame" for how an irregular force helps solidify and legitimize its control in the eyes of the international state system may depend upon the pragmatism of the irregular force. In the case of Hezbollah, the irregular force opted to play within the political system of the Lebanese state; and Hezbollah continues to operate today. The Taliban opted to attempt to take total control of Afghanistan and their extremism played a part in their loss of power and control in late 2001. These cases are ironic because Hezbollah initially sought to establish an Islamic state modeled after Iran while the Taliban initially sought regional stability around Qandahar, but the Taliban ultimately sought to take over Afghanistan and create an Islamic state while Hezbollah pragmatically opted to enter the Lebanese political system. Thus, these cases suggest the complexity of irregular warfare and the potential value of external support organizations identifying and operating through more pragmatic irregular forces.

B. TECHNIQUES FOR INFLUENCING IRREGULAR FORCES

Based on the cases of Hezbollah and the Taliban, external support to irregular forces attempting to gain control of under-governed space should likely begin through the establishment of personal contacts and relationships prior to the formation of the irregular force. This early contact can assist the external support organization in gaining trust and influence with the leadership of the irregular force. The external support can consist of the provision of financing of all operations, both lethal and non-lethal; logistical support such as fuel, vehicles,

weapons, and ammunition; training inside of training camps; advisement from experts in military, political, social, economic, and information operations; and may include assistance in networking key indigenous parties to strengthen the irregular force.

These cases suggest that establishing complete control over the irregular force will be extremely difficult, if not impossible. The external support organization may be able to improve its influence if it establishes a long-term relationship with an irregular force with a similar ideology, and if the external support organization maintains tight control of the resources being provided to the irregular force rather than attempting to control an irregular force when it receives support from multiple sources.

Despite the successes observed in the cases of Hezbollah and the Taliban, these cases also show that operating through irregular forces to gain control of under-governed spaces should not be viewed as a panacea. For example, both Hezbollah and the Taliban were based upon a single ethnic group, and both irregular forces had difficulty establishing control in under-governed spaces where that same ethnic group did not predominate. Overcoming or repairing ethnic cleavages goes beyond the scope of this study and may call for very critical and realistic goal setting prior to the execution of irregular warfare of this variety; but despite these limitations, the cases did provide techniques that irregular forces and the external support organizations working with these forces used to establish political control of under-governed spaces

in weakened or failed states. These techniques should assist in future doctrine design and irregular warfare campaign planning. From this study, some additional lessons emerged as well.

C. IRREGULAR LESSONS LEARNED

In addition to providing techniques for how irregular forces established political control of under-governed space and how their external supporters controlled or influenced these forces, the cases in this study provided some additional lessons learned for future efforts in irregular warfare.

1. Nature of Irregular Organizational Design

The cases of this study displayed several facets of how irregular forces can organize for irregular warfare. Irregular warfare has been predicted to involve protracted struggles in the sense that insurgencies and other forms of irregular warfare often last for years and sometimes even decades, but the setting of conditions for irregular warfare can be protracted as well.³³⁴ In both cases, the irregular forces formed from social and religious networks formed over 10 years prior to the initiation of their irregular warfare operations. Additionally, in both cases the external support organizations established links and influence with members of the future irregular forces prior to the official formation of the irregular forces. Finally, both irregular forces began as network organizations, but evolved into hierarchical forms as they conducted irregular warfare

³³⁴ *IW JOC*, 17.

activities. This suggests that irregular organizations interacting as networks will be able to conduct common network activities such as passing information and establishing personal relationships, but may have to take on a more hierarchical form prior to attempting to control space. The cases also suggest that under appropriate circumstances, external supporters can influence how the hierarchy takes shape through their ability to provide resources and credibility to selected members of the irregular force.

2. Full-Spectrum Irregular Warfare

The cases showed that irregular warfare can span the spectrum of warfare and involve tactical and technical aspects requiring a high level of training, education, and expertise. In circumstances where the irregular force faces more powerful opponents, the irregular force will likely choose to conduct guerrilla warfare aimed at harassing and wearing down its opponents. When the irregular force has parity with its opponents, then more conventional operations can be expected as the irregular force will not be forced to hit and run, but can stand and fight in hopes of inflicting heavier damage against its opponents. The style of fighting may not be mutually exclusive and may involve both guerrilla and conventional fighting depending on the characteristics of different micro-environments. For example, Hezbollah used guerrilla warfare against the Israeli Defense Forces, which possessed superior military power, but Hezbollah used more conventional warfare against its irregular opponents in the AMAL militias when it fought them for control of Shia enclaves outside the influence of the IDF. Thus, irregular

forces may fight "full spectrum" irregular warfare as circumstances in different portions of their fight call for different strategies.

Additionally, irregular warfare may involve very technical capabilities that require high levels of expertise and training. The building of improvised explosive devices, suicide vests, and car bombs all require substantial training in electronics and explosives employment. Additionally, the technical skills involved in operating tanks, employing indirect fires, and flying aircraft require extensive training not often associated with guerrilla forces. External supporters can offer tremendous value by providing this expertise either directly when they physically provide the expertise, or indirectly when they train the irregular force in the appropriate skills or link the irregular force with other surrogates who have the required skills.

Facilitating required expertise can complicate covert efforts in external support. The presence of new or enhanced skills not previously present in an operational environment may draw undesired attention to external support efforts aimed at hiding the source of support. The capacity of the modern media only increases the complexity of covert operations. These cases suggest that these risks can be mitigated in part through the use of training camps located in secure areas where expertise can be imparted outside of the view of prying eyes. Additionally, efforts at physically advising surrogates on the battlefield can be hidden through controlling where advisors are located on the

battlefield or by utilizing advisors whose physical attributes blend into the irregular force.

3. Non-Military Skills in Irregular Warfare

Since irregular warfare involves establishing control over and legitimacy and support from the population, the studied cases confirm that non-military skills will likely be required to gain political control of under-governed space. In certain circumstances, irregular forces may have the capability and capacity to physically exert control over an area through military force alone; however, these studies suggest that the use of subversion can also assist the irregular force in gaining control. The use of subversion can reduce the amount of military effort required and can achieve control without actual combat.

In addition, maintaining that control will likely require administrative, economic, and communications skills as well. The cases displayed how irregular forces strengthened their control through the use of shadow governance in the provision of political decision-making, law enforcement, justice, and the provision of socio-economic services. As noted previously, the irregular force can also persuade its controlled populations through traditional and modern forms of media such as spreading myths and ideas through word of mouth and through more modern multi-media such as newspapers, radio, TV, and the internet. These skills all require non-military expertise from the irregular force and suggest that irregular forces benefit from possessing members with the bureaucratic and technical skills needed to run a government; albeit a shadow one.

4. Complexity and Political Risk of Irregular Warfare

This study suggests that irregular warfare aimed at controlling under-governed space through irregular forces may involve high levels of complexity and political risk. This finding is consistent with DoD's IW JOC which states that irregular warfare will be complex, "messy," and ambiguous.³³⁵

First, the cases displayed techniques which irregular forces seeking domestic or international legitimacy should likely avoid. Both cases utilized techniques such as terrorism and social restrictions which were deemed extreme or evil by certain international and even by certain domestic audiences. Different cultures consider different actions extreme or evil, but irregular forces' actions impact how they are viewed and can have varying negative ramifications if their actions are found unsuitable by audiences with political, economic, or social influence.

Second, both cases involved the extensive use of cash to facilitate irregular warfare activities. The establishment of training camps, construction companies, social welfare organizations, and the payment of bribes all involved cash gathered from foreign aid and domestic forms of irregular taxation such as road tolls and donations such as religious tithing.

Third, the cases suggest that a state providing external support can offer too much support if it is not coordinated and controlled properly. The case of the Taliban showed how the Taliban received support from

³³⁵ IW JOC, 6.

Pakistani agencies other than the ISI such as the political party, JUI, the interior ministry, and local governors in Pakistan's tribal areas. These additional avenues of support eroded the ISI's control over the Taliban who could receive support from the other agencies. Conversely, in the case of Hezbollah, Iran appeared to overcome this by managing their support by embedding Iranians from either the IRGC or from the Iranian embassy in Syria into Hezbollah's executive council.

Fourth, both of these cases involved states which provided external support to irregular forces operating inside of other states with which the supporting state was not at war. Iran supported Hezbollah in its resistance efforts against the IDF, but was not at war with the collapsed state of Lebanon. Pakistan provided support to the Taliban to assist in meeting Pakistani foreign policy objectives, but was not at war with the weakened state of Afghanistan.

Fifth, both irregular forces fought and disrupted the irregular forces of other non-state actors during their efforts to establish political control of under-governed space. Hezbollah fought and disrupted AMAL to secure control of Shia enclaves. The Taliban fought and defeated various competing non-state actors, but in particular Gulbiddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i Islami forces.

All of these aspects of irregular warfare represent complex and politically risky facets with which members of the U.S. government and the U.S. population may not be fully comfortable as they may have questions about how these

aspects of IW can be properly controlled by U.S. oversight agencies and how these aspects synch with American values.

D. IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study suggest potential implications for USSOCOM, DoD, and the United States government and areas of suggested future research. These implications involve SOF's ability to provide protracted, persistent, and proactive capabilities and capacities in support of the Quadrennial Defense Review and U.S. strategic guidance; the potential need for changes in how particular SOF units will organize and operate; and questions which the U.S. government will likely have to confront if it truly intends for its supporting agencies to meet its foreign policy objectives in support of the War on Terror.

1. Protracted, Persistent, and Proactive Presence

The QDR tasked SOF to expand its capabilities and capacity to clandestinely conduct "sustained" unconventional warfare in dozens of countries and to provide a persistent global presence in order to prepare the environment to counter terror networks.³³⁶ The findings within this study suggest that this will require a protracted, persistent, and proactive global presence today in order to identify and shape the future irregular forces of the next decade; however, the elements of SOF which are trained to conduct unconventional warfare- Army Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations-are heavily focused on the major combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Future

³³⁶ 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 23, 44.

research should address whether DoD needs to re-evaluate its current use of these elements if it does indeed desire a global presence and the potential to conduct unconventional warfare in dozens of countries simultaneously. Future research could also address whether a central focus on two countries in one region limits the U.S. government's ability to identify and influence future security environments if SOF are not developing required personal contacts today.

2. Potential Changes for Special Operations Forces

The findings of this study also suggest that USSOCOM may need to adapt how Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations organize, train, and operate, and that the U.S. government may need to realistically look at who in the interagency will be capable of providing certain capabilities in different irregular warfare strategies. The cases within this study suggest that to operate by, with, and through irregular forces to establish control of under-governed spaces and deny sanctuary to enemies of the United States, SOF and the U.S. government need to be able to perform "full spectrum" irregular warfare and to provide both highly technical as well as non-military expertise to an irregular warfare campaign.

Army Special Forces understand the requirement to operate indirectly through irregular forces from the early stages of unconventional warfare involving small, harassing guerrilla attacks to the later stages when irregular forces, having achieved parity with their opponents, may conduct more conventional operations involving maneuver warfare and firepower to disrupt or defeat their enemies. Additionally, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units expect to

assist in the provision of governance and to conduct information operations to influence target populations.

However, the cases studied suggest that SOF units may also need to be able to conduct additional activities such as clandestine network building and be able and willing to forego operating on the front lines and instead operate as trainers outside the prying eyes of the modern media in order to remain covert. Additionally, the cases suggest that SOF may be required to provide expertise for building and administering a shadow government capable of providing security and services while they also tap into and influence traditional word of mouth networks and provide advice in modern radio, TV, and internet production. The cases also suggest that SOF should be capable of operating synergistically so that as one element assists irregular forces as they locate and disrupt threats in an under-governed area, a second element assists irregular forces as they establish a shadow government to begin to cement their political control of the area, while a third element assists an irregular force in providing security and essential services to the target population.

Finally, the IW JOC suggests that either the interagency needs to "ruggedize" their capabilities, or DoD needs to build a civil-military capability to perform non-military roles where the operational environment precludes other government agencies from performing these activities or operations.³³⁷ Future research can attempt to determine whether USSOCOM needs to re-organize or adapt its training, education, and expertise to account for the expanded

³³⁷ IW JOC, 39.

requirements of contemporary unconventional warfare which these cases suggest involve a great deal more than overtly organizing, training, equipping, and advising irregular forces to conduct only military activities. Additionally, future research should be conducted to determine potential ramifications if USSOCOM decides to count on "other government agencies" to provide required non-military expertise before, during, and after future SOF-led irregular warfare campaigns, in lieu of enhancing the capabilities of Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations units, and the interagency fails to adapt thereby leaving capability gaps.

3. Potential Changes for the U.S. Government

Finally, based on its case studies, this study suggests that the U.S. government should investigate how it plans to authorize and empower its subordinate agencies to conduct irregular warfare. Two aspects observed within both case studies pose difficult dilemmas for the U.S. government.

First, the cases show that irregular warfare can often involve the extensive use of cash to facilitate activities, but the fiscal limitations of U.S. law and bureaucratic risk aversion can greatly hinder the flexible use of cash. As an example, after the start of the War on Terror, the U.S. Congress authorized funding for SOF to facilitate unconventional warfare activities, but this authorization, commonly referred to as "1208 Funding," expired at the end of Fiscal Year 2007.³³⁸ This funding provided fiscal

³³⁸ MAJ David Haskell (Unconventional Warfare Plans Officer, United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC)) in discussions with the author, 22 August 2007.

authorizations which enhanced SOF's ability to operate by, with, and through irregular forces, but limitations were emplaced by some mid-level DoD comptrollers who were uncomfortable with the new authorization because they feared that SOF would abuse the use of the funding.³³⁹ These actions by DoD comptrollers provide an example of the discomfort felt by some U.S. government personnel when operators are empowered with cash to facilitate IW operations. Future research should investigate how the U.S. government can provide the amounts of cash needed to facilitate IW activities, and how it can overcome the bureaucratic aversion to "uncontrolled" cash in the contemporary operating environment.

Second, although the case studies of Hezbollah and the Taliban observed how irregular forces could control under-governed space, they each provided examples of how irregular forces, with external support, disrupted and defeated other non-state actors in their areas as they fought for control inside of states with which the states providing external support were not at war. The IW JOC introduces this scenario involving DoD's use of unconventional warfare through irregular forces to disrupt a non-state actor such as a terrorist group which has found sanctuary within a "non-belligerent state" with whom the United States is not at war.³⁴⁰ The JOC emphasizes that this scenario poses extreme political and military risk.³⁴¹ In addition to the political risk involved in operating in non-belligerent

³³⁹ Haskell.

³⁴⁰ *IW JOC*, 32.

³⁴¹ *IW JOC*, 32.

states, elements of the U.S. military do not presently feel comfortable with conducting unconventional warfare even in support of major combat operations as it does not produce the cleaner and more predictable results of conventional warfare.³⁴² Given that the concept of one irregular force defeating a rival irregular force in an under-governed area is not new, future research should attempt to address how the U.S. government can overcome its aversion to conducting unconventional warfare against non-state actors inside of non-belligerent states, and if U.S. policy calls for this strategy, how U.S. political leaders can overcome the cultural aversion to the strategy within the Department of Defense to ensure that the capability and the capacity exist when called.

E. SUMMARY

To conclude, under-governed spaces have been identified by the U.S. government as potential sanctuaries or safe havens for threats to the United States, and the Department of Defense has determined that it will act to deny this sanctuary. One strategy for denying this sanctuary is to assist indigenous elements to establish political control of the under-governed space; however, if the state responsible for the under-governed space does not have legitimacy with its population, another course of action could call for employing SOF to operate indirectly through irregular forces who can achieve legitimacy with the population to establish political control of the space.

³⁴² Hy S. Rothstein, *Afghanistan & The Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare*. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2006), 177-180.

The cases of Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Taliban in Afghanistan provided examples of how irregular forces established control of under-governed space through the coercion and persuasion of military, political, social, economic, and informational techniques. In these cases, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence provided techniques for how organizations providing external support to irregular forces can influence their surrogates in order to allow the state providing the external support to achieve its foreign policy objectives. From these cases, additional lessons learned were developed about irregular warfare and implications were detailed which offer suggestions for future research into additional aspects of irregular warfare.

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